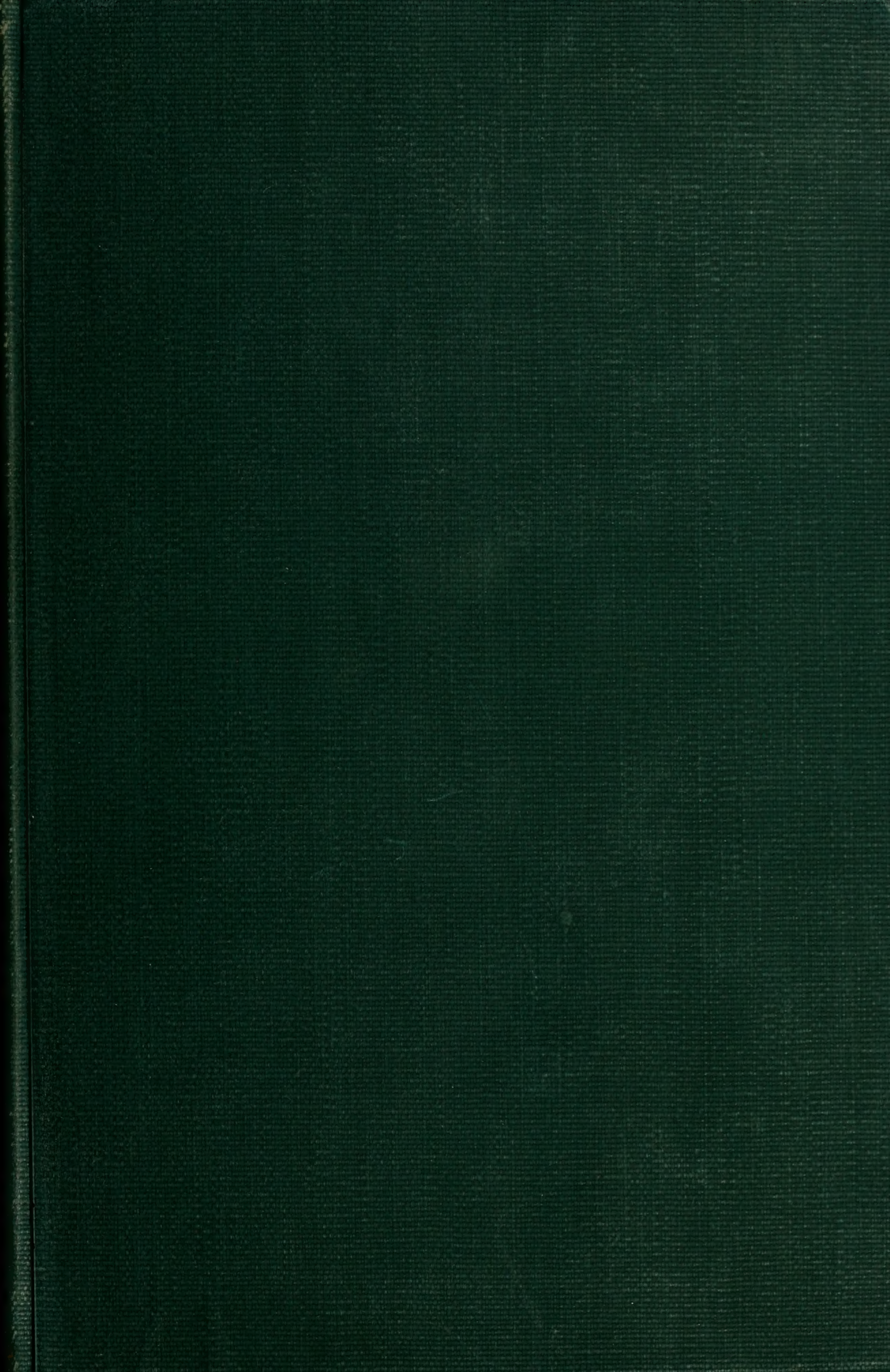
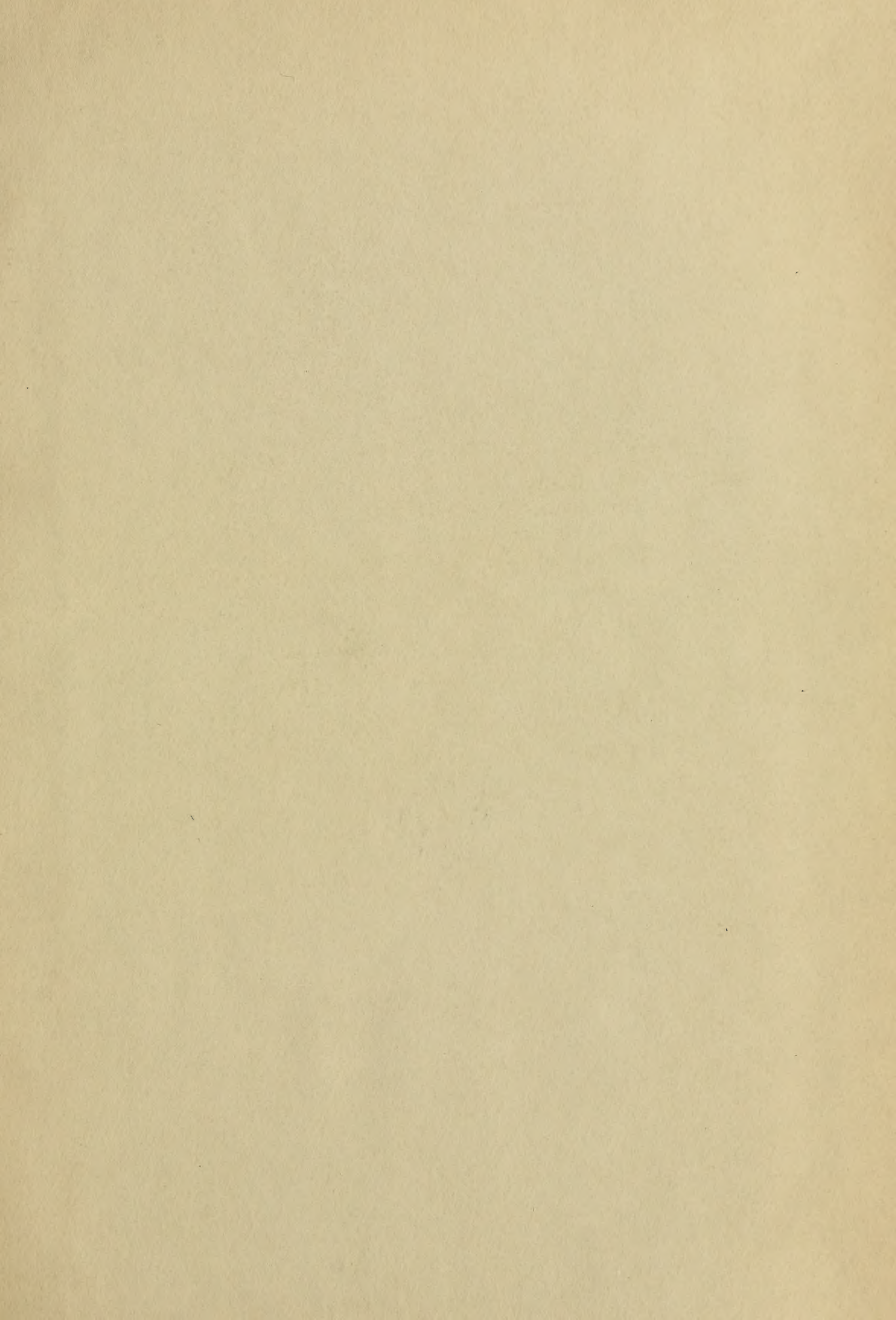
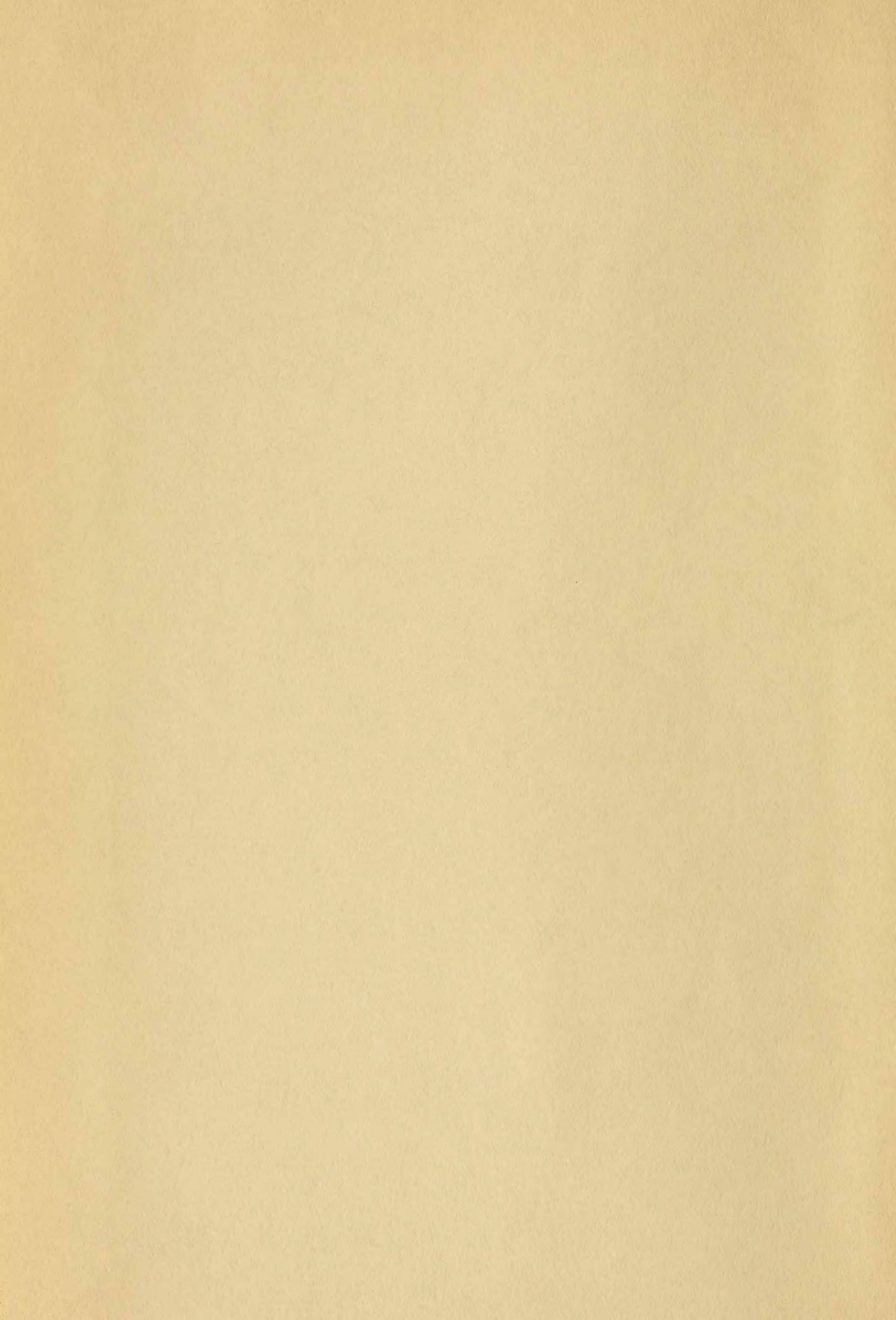
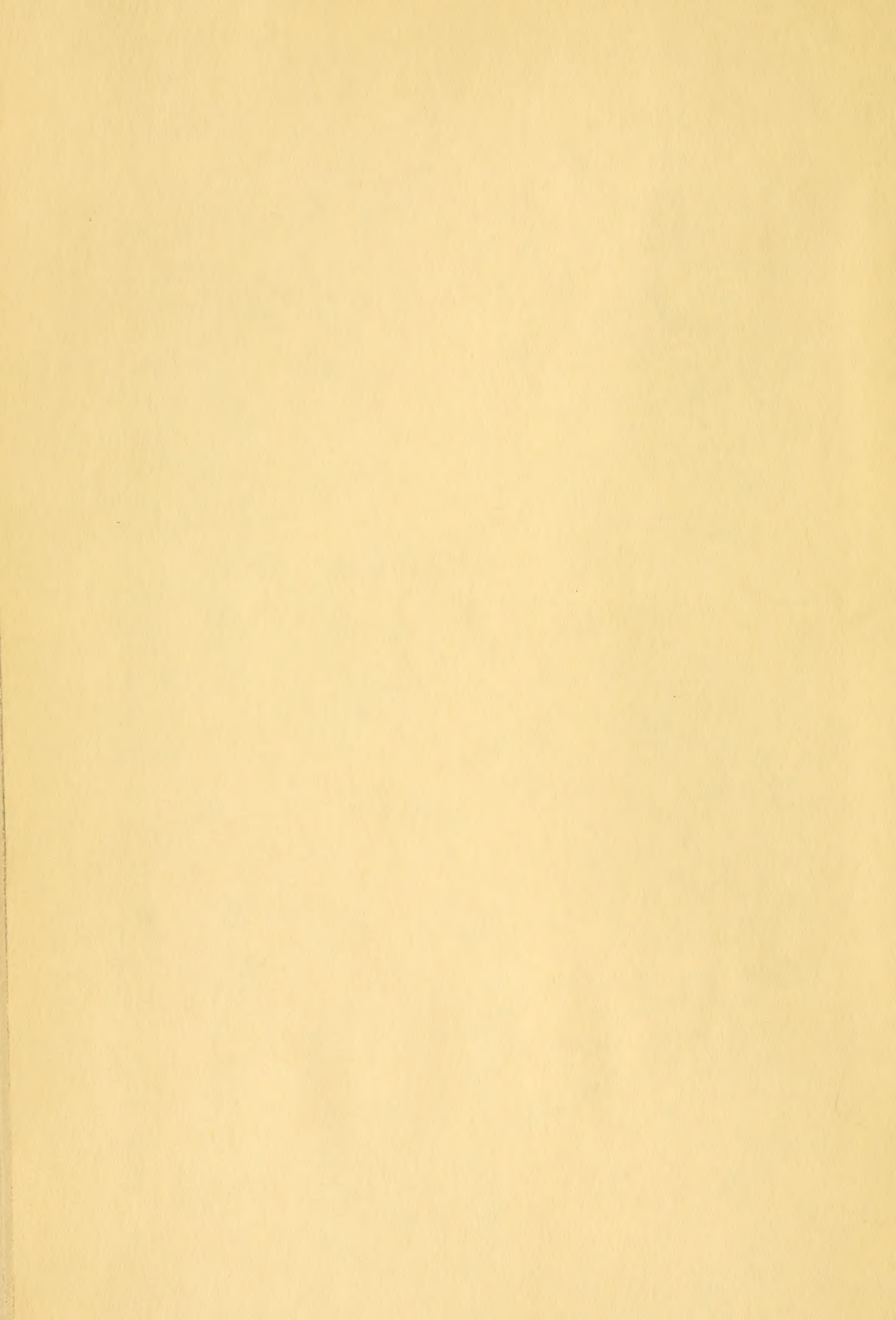




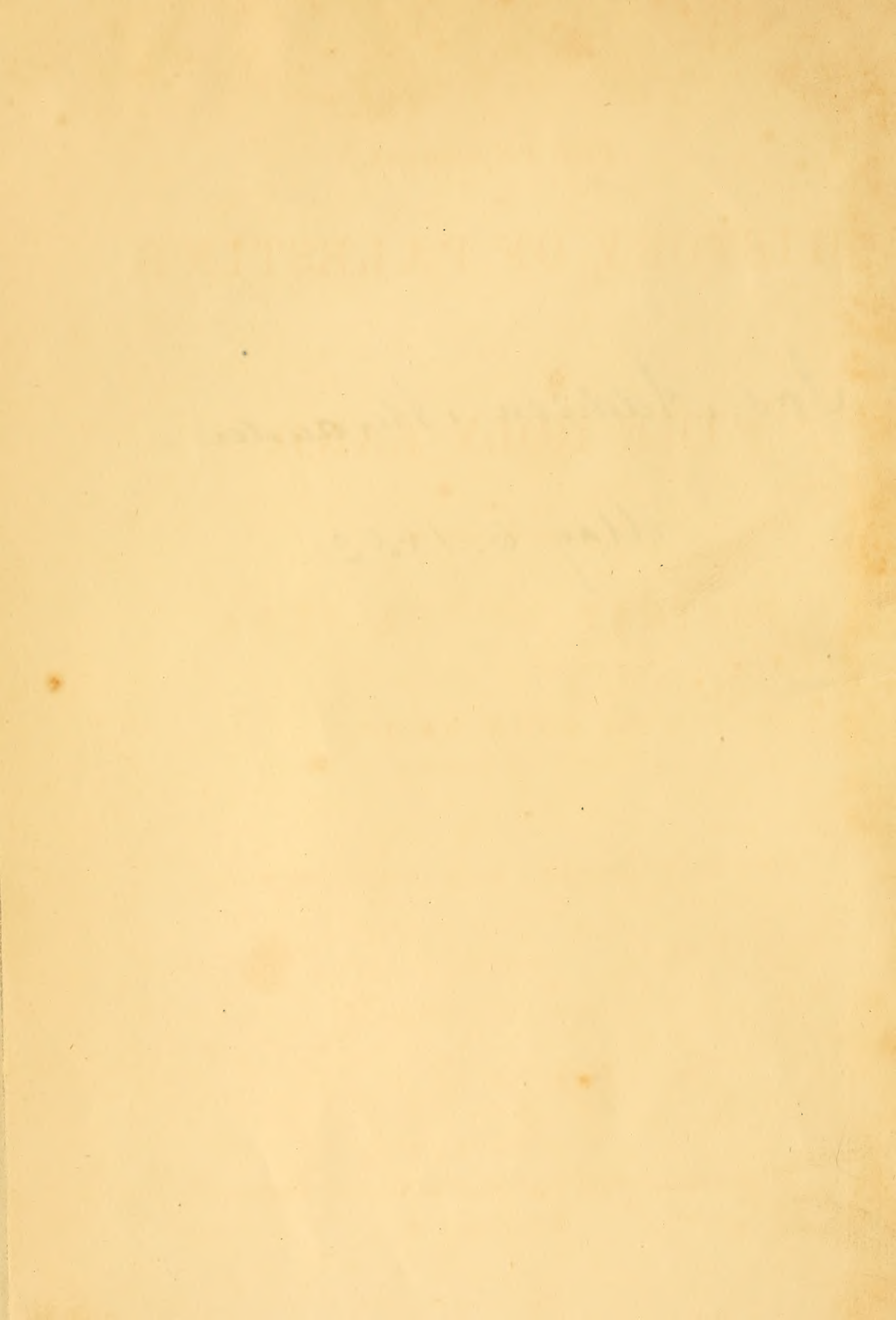


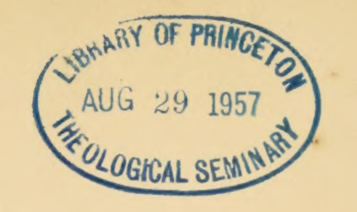




Jos. Addison Alexander

May 6. 1852.





THE PICTORIAL

HISTORY OF PALESTINE

AND

THE HOLY LAND,

INCLUDING A COMPLETE

HISTORY OF THE JEWS.

BY JOHN KITTO,

Editor of "The Pictorial Bible."

WITH FIVE HUNDRED ENGRAVINGS ON WOOD.

VOL. I.

BIBLICAL HISTORY.

LONDON:
CHARLES KNIGHT AND CO., LUDGATE STREET.
MDCCCXLIV.

CONTENTS OF THE BIBLE HISTORY.

BOOK I.—THE PATRIARCHS.

BOOK II.—THE HEBREWS IN EGYPT AND THE WILDERNESS.

BOOK III.—JOSHUA AND THE JUDGES.

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BOOK V.—THE REMNANT.

ILLUSTRATIONS

TO THE

BIBLE HISTORY OF PALESTINE.

ERRATA FOR BIBLE HISTORY OF PALESTINE.

Page 3, line three, *for* 1062 *read* 1002.
,, 16. In the last compartment of the table at the foot of the page, the second line, giving the date of Abraham's Call, should be read thus,—A.M. 3258, B.C. 2153: interval, 1002.
,, 205, lines two and seven, *for* Aholiah *read* Aholiab.
,, 267, ,, twenty-one, *for* tunics *read* times.
,, 286, ,, eleven, *for* hundreds *read* thousands.
,, 295, ,, seven, *put* afflicted *after* towards.
,, 339, ,, eleven from bottom of text, *insert* not *after* was.
,, 352, ,, four ,, ,, ,, *for* them *read* themselves.
,, 353, ,, two, *for* largest ones *read* large stones.
,, 444, ,, twenty, *for* not *read* now.
,, 492, ,, eleven from bottom, *for* Aruanah *read* Araunah.
,, 676, ,, seventeen, *dele* afterwards Cæsarea.
,, 702, ,, fourteen, *for* Hyrcanius *read* Hyrcanus.


HISTORY
OF
PALESTINE
ANELAY
S. SLY



BOOK I.

THE PATRIARCHS.

CHAPTER I.

FIRST INHABITANTS OF PALESTINE.



[An Oriental Migration.]

The History of Palestine, and of the Hebrew people, may be most conveniently commenced with the call of Abraham, which, according to Hales, took place in the year of the world 3258, after the deluge 1062 years, and 2153 years before the birth of Christ. (1)

The ages which had passed since the deluge, concurring with the still long duration of human life, had again replenished with people the regions around the original seats of the human race. That great event, the confusion of tongues, which occurred 600 years after the deluge, must have greatly accelerated, and even compelled, more energetic movements than had previously taken place.

The descendants of Shem appear to have extended themselves gradually over the regions east and north-east of the river Tigris; the children of Japhet spread themselves into Asia Minor, whence it was their ultimate destination to be impelled into Europe, and to fill the length and

breadth of that continent. The posterity of Ham remained in chief possession of Mesopotamia; they also formed settlements at the head of the Persian Gulf, in Arabia, and in Canaan; they established empires in Assyria and Egypt; and, as their numbers multiplied, they advanced into Ethiopia, and other remoter parts of the African peninsula.

The history of Japhet's race is a blank in the early accounts of the Scriptures; and that of Shem's is little more. The sacred historian confines his notice to one family of Shem's descendants; and the intercourse of that family with the races of Ham, is the circumstance which evolves far more information concerning their early history and condition than we possess concerning any of the other descendants of Noah. From all that history tells, they appear to have been the first authors of the arts of civilisation and social life. But remembering the other races of which authentic history takes no occasion to speak, this need not be positively affirmed. That, however, very important advancements had, even in this remote age, been made by the posterity of Ham, appears very plainly in the early intercourse of the Hebrew patriarchs with Egypt.

A division of the posterity of Canaan, the youngest son of Ham, left the Arabian shores of the Red Sea, and settled in the country whose history we have undertaken to write; and they gave to it the name of their father, from whom also they are, collectively, called Canaanites.(2) They manifestly were not very numerous at the time this history opens. They did not by any means fill the country, but lived dispersed, in detached and independent clans, and, contented with the use of such lands around their towns as they needed for their own subsistence, they beheld without jealousy powerful emirs, even of the race of Shem, establish themselves in the plains and feed their cattle in the vacant pastures. The time for territorial contests had not yet come; and probably the settled Canaanites regarded the presence of the Bedouin sheikhs as an advantage, relieving them from the need of attention to pastoral affairs, by affording a ready market where they might obtain milk, butter, cheese, meat and skins, in exchange for their surplus corn and other vegetable produce; and they appear to have been quite sensible of the advantages of an open traffic with the pastoral chiefs.

It might be easy enough to work out a plausible and ingenious account of the social condition of the Canaanites at the time when Abraham came among them. But as this must be purely conjectural, or founded on circumstances which did not occur till four or five centuries later, during which it cannot be doubted that great changes took place in their civil and political state, we shall avoid such a course, and confine ourselves to the slight notices which may be gleaned from the history of Abraham, with the very few more which the histories of his son and grandson offer.

Their language was the same as that of Abraham and the other patriarchs, who at all times speak to them without the medium of an interpreter. This was also true ages after, whenever any communication took place between the descendants of Abraham and the Canaanites or the Phœnicians.

They were divided into a number of small independent communities. Every town with a small surrounding district, and probably some dependent villages, appears to have been a sovereign state, acknowledging the control of no superior, but being in alliance with its neighbours for common objects. The vale of Siddim alone, the area of which does not exceed that of one of our smallest counties, is known to have contained five of such states. It appears to have been the plan, as the population increased, to establish new cities and new states on ground not previously appropriated; in which case the tendency to consolidate numerous small states into a few large ones would not, in ordinary circumstances, arise till the country was fully peopled. We may well be astonished at the prodigious number of small states which the Hebrews found in Palestine on their return from Egypt; but we do not, with some, infer that they were equally numerous in the time of Abraham. On the contrary, it rather seems to us that, in the long interval, the towns and states went on increasing with the population. That towns and states were as numerous in choice localities, such as the fertile vale of Siddim, in the time of Abraham as in that of Joshua, we can well understand; but not so in the country at large. It seems also that the states, though fewer, were not larger at the former date than at the latter, the extent of ground which they divided being proportion-

ably smaller. At both periods the states of the Canaanites suggest a comparison to our own boroughs, consisting of a town, with dependencies of fields, and perhaps villages.

And the comparison perhaps holds further; for the *meleks* or kings of those tiny kingdoms do not appear to have been more than chief magistrates, or patriarchal chiefs, with very limited powers. The mayors of our boroughs have probably greater civil power than they had. Indeed, it has more than once occurred to us to doubt whether these meleks had any independent civil power, and whether they were not regarded merely as the military commanders of the people in time of war, and at all times the agent of their public transactions with other states. The real power, civil and political, of these small states seems to have remained in the body of the adult male population, and practically, it may seem, in the elder portion of it, from that deference which was paid to seniority in those early times. When Simon and Levi, the sons of Jacob, proposed on certain conditions an alliance with Hamor, the Canaanitish prince of Shechem, the latter was well pleased with the proposal, but would not conclude on what answer to give until he had consulted the citizens in the gate. The same tenor of conduct always appears when occasions arise. In some cases so little notice is taken of the melek, that it may almost be doubted whether particular states had any such functionary. A public transaction about a transfer of land with such "a mighty emir" as Abraham was well calculated to require the presence of any prince which the Hittites of Hebron might have had, but no one appears in the account of that transaction. Abraham bows to "the children of Heth;" he addresses his proposals to them, and they reply to him. If the Hittites had a king, he was doubtless present; and if so, the manner in which he was overlooked, or in which he is included without distinction as one of "the children of Heth," strikingly illustrates the position of the melek in these small communities. The only other alternative seems to be that the Hittites of Hebron had no king in the time of Abraham.

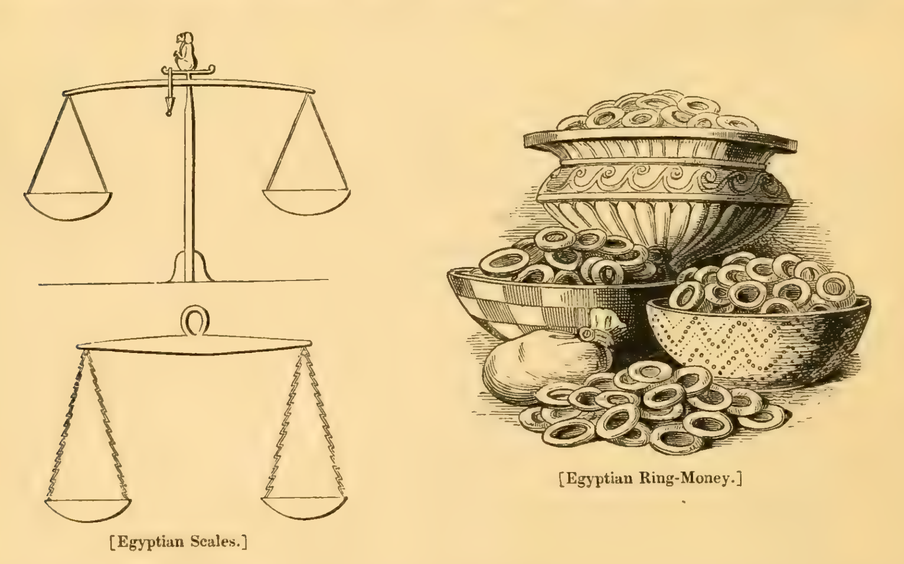
All the states in the vale of Siddim had kings, and all we know of them is that they were the military leaders in war. From the answer of the king of Sodom to Abraham, waiving all claim to the goods which the patriarch had recovered from the Mesopotamian spoilers, without any reference to the wishes of his people in this matter, we may infer that, as might be expected, the melek had higher powers in all warlike matters than were allowed to him in the affairs of peace. The only other act of a Canaanitish king which we meet with implies nothing in this respect. This was the act of Melchizedek, the king of Salem, who brought refreshments to Abraham and his party when he returned from the slaughter of the kings.

The mention of this remarkable person leads us to observe that there is not in Scripture the least indication that the Canaanites were idolaters in the time of Abraham, or indeed at any time before the house of Israel went down into Egypt. The king of Salem is expressly declared to have been a priest of the Most High God; and whenever suitable occasion offers, it appears that the Canaanites knew and reverenced the God of their fathers. It is true that they knew not this God as Abraham knew him; and it is more than likely that, with some exceptions, such as that of Melchizedek, they had sunk into that state of indifference, and of ignorance concerning God's character and attributes, which was but a too suitable preparation for that actual idolatry into which they ultimately fell. But that there was any positive idolatry in the time of Abraham, or before the patriarchs left the land, we see no reason to conclude. If we look at the remarkable case of the destruction of Sodom and the cities of the plain, we cannot fail to observe that idolatry is nowhere alluded to as one of the crimes for which the inhabitants were punished. They were punished because they were "sinners before the Lord exceedingly," and because there were not among them any righteous or just men. What the character of their sins was we know. The repugnance of Isaac and Rebekah to the marriage of their sons with Canaanitish women, has often been alleged as a proof that they were by that time become idolaters, even by many who allow that they were not such in the time of Abraham. But the cited case proves nothing whatever, and could only have been adduced from that ignorance of the manners of the East which is now in a course of removal. The ideas of the patriarchal emirs required that their sons should marry into their own families, and this would have been frustrated by marriage with Canaanites. If this argument for the

idolatry of the Canaanites be applicable to the time of Isaac's latter days, it must be equally applicable to the time of Abraham, for he was as anxious as Isaac could be that his son should obtain a wife from the house of his fathers in Padan-aram. But this argument is used by those who confess that the Canaanites were *not* idolaters in the days of Abraham.

We have little information concerning the social condition, arts, and occupations of the Canaanites at this early date. That "the Canaanites by the sea," that is, the Phœnicians, had already taken to the sea, and carried on some traffic with the neighbouring coasts, is very likely, but more than we can affirm. But we know that the people of Canaan lived in walled towns, in the gates of which public business was transacted. They cultivated the ground; they grew corn; and, as they had wine, they must have cultivated the vine; which they probably did upon the sides of the hills, terraced for the purpose, according to that fashion of vine culture which has always prevailed in that country. Some find in the Perizzites a body of Canaanitish pastors, moving about with their flocks and herds, without any fixed dwelling. But as all this is founded upon a doubtful etymology, we shall lay no stress upon it. Doubtless the Canaanites had cattle, and paid some attention to pasturage; but the presence, in their unappropriated lands, of pastoral chiefs like Abraham, who, by making it their sole pursuit, enjoyed peculiar advantages in the rearing of cattle, and could offer the produce of their flocks and herds on very easy terms to the settled inhabitants, was likely to prevent the latter from being much engaged in pastoral undertakings. Of their military character at this early period we know little, and that little is not much to their advantage. They were beaten in every one of the warlike transactions of this age which the Scriptures relate, or to which any allusion is made. Doubtless every adult male knew the use of arms, and was liable to be called upon to use them when any public occasion required.

They had arrived to the use of silver as a medium of exchange, and that the silver was weighed in affairs of purchase and sale involves the use of the scale and balanced beam. In what form they exhibited the silver used for money we know not with any certainty; they



[Egyptian Scales.]

[Egyptian Ring-Money.]

certainly had no coined money; for even the Egyptians, who were far before the Canaanites in all the arts of civilisation, continued long after this to use circular bars, or rings, of silver for money; and, most likely, the silver money of the Canaanites bore the same form.

The description of the burying-ground which Abraham bought for 400 shekels of silver of Ephron the Hittite, may perhaps inform us concerning the sepulchres in which the Canaanites liked to bury their dead. It was a cave in a spot of ground well planted with trees.

Seeing that there will hereafter be frequent occasion to mention by name the several tribes

of Canaanites inhabiting the land, and that some of them are historically connected with the early history of the Hebrews, it will conduce to the clearness of the ensuing narrative, if, in this place, these tribes be enumerated, and their several seats pointed out.

While the whole of the nation, collectively, bore the name of Canaanites, as descended from Canaan, there are occasions in which the Scriptures apply the name in a special manner to a part of the whole. Thus in Gen. xiii. 8, we read, "the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites;" and so in other places, except that the Girgashites are sometimes also named. We know that there were many tribes not included in this list of names, and the question is, to which or to what portion of those unnamed, the name of Canaanites is here given. The question is thought a perplexed one, and there appear some serious objections to all the explanations which we have seen. We therefore satisfy ourselves with the notion, that this is merely a method of summary statement to avoid the frequent repetition of a long list of names: that, first, "the Canaanites" are put for all those clans not intended to be particularly enumerated; and then follow the names of those tribes which were best known to the Hebrews and of the most importance to them. This view is confirmed by our observing that the tribes *not* named, and which we, therefore, suppose to be included under the name of Canaanites, are precisely those most remote from the early Hebrews, and with whom they had the least to do. That they are in other texts described as situated "at the sea," corresponds with the same intimation. In a general sense it will, under this explanation, be found to embrace, primarily, those several branches of the posterity of Canaan which settled on the northern coast, and were, collectively, known in general history as the Phœnicians. The matter appears to have been thus understood by the Seventy, for they render מלכי הכנעני of Josh. v. 1, by *οἵ Βασιλεῖς της Φοινίκης*, or "kings of the Canaanites (which were by the sea)," by "kings of the Phœnicians:" and many ages after, the names were interchangeable; for the woman whom one Evangelist (Matt. xv. 22) calls "a woman of Canaan," is called by another (Mark vii. 26), "a Syro-Phœnician woman."

Whether the families of Canaan, in migrating to the country to which they gave his name, were headed by his sons, from whom they took their own distinguishing names, or removed after their deaths, does not by any means appear. The question does not seem of much importance, except as it might help to fix the time of the first occupation of the country; and we allude to it merely that no forms of expression which we may incidentally use, should be considered to involve the expression of any opinion on the subject. There is, however, sufficient evidence that the Canaanites had been a good while settled in the land, and we are repeatedly assured in Scripture that the Hittite city of Hebron was founded seven years before Zoan in Egypt.

The Hebrew patriarchs, during their sojourn in Canaan, never approached the borders of the Phœnicians, and, consequently, *they* are not mentioned in the history, unless under the name of Canaanites. Indeed, we should not have been assured that the Phœnician tribes were descended from Canaan, were it not for the genealogy in Gen. x., which gives us a list of his sons, and assures us that all their families settled in Canaan. In this list the name of Sidon occurs first, as that of Canaan's first-born son. He was the father of the Sidonians, the chief of the Phœnician tribes; and the great, commercial, and very ancient city of Sidon, the mother of the still greater Tyre, was called after him. The list includes other names which cannot but be considered as those of families which, along with the Sidonians, history comprehends under the Phœnician name. Such are the Arkites, the Sinites, the Arvadites, and the Zemarites, whose territories seem to have extended along the coast, northward from the town and territory of Sidon.

The ancient Phœnician city of Arca probably took its name from the Arkites, and, therefore, will serve to indicate their situation. Arca stood nearly midway between Tripoli and Tortosa, and about five miles from the sea, among the lower ranges of Lebanon, fronting the sea-board plain. Here, in a situation commanding a beautiful view over the plain, the sea, and the mountains, Burckhardt found ruins, which he supposes to be those of Arca, consisting of large and extensive mounds, traces of ancient dwellings, blocks of hewn stone, remains of walls,

and fragments of granite columns. To the north was a hill, apparently artificial, still bearing the name of Tel Arka, and on which the temple or the citadel probably stood in former times.

In the parts adjoining was an ancient city bearing the name of Sin, and which, in connexion with other circumstances, may be thought to indicate the situation of the Sinites. This city had, so far back as the time of Jerome, long been ruined by war; but the site on which it once stood still retained this ancient name.



[Aradus.]

The Arvadites are said by Josephus to have occupied and given their name to the small island of Aradus, called Arvad and Arphad in the Scriptures,* and the inhabitants of which are by Ezekiel mentioned along with the Sidonians, as taking an active part in the maritime commerce of Tyre. This island, which is about one league from the shore, and not above a mile in circumference, ultimately became the port and chief town of this enterprising and prosperous section of the Phœnician people; and there was a time when even Romans regarded with admiration its lofty houses, built with more stories than those of Rome, and its cisterns hewn in the rock. All this, except the cisterns and some fragments of wall, has passed away; but Arvad is still the seat of a town, and, being a mart of transit, its inhabitants are still all engaged in commerce. Though the island was the favourite seat of the people, as their wealth and peace were there safe from the wars and troubles of the continent, and their shipping needed not to hazard the dangers of the coast, they were by no means without possessions on the mainland, for their dominion along the shore extended from Tortosa,† which lay opposite their island, northward to Jebilee. They were, therefore, the most northernly of the Phœnician people.‡

The Zemarites are mentioned next to the Arvadites, and, correspondingly, they are usually, and with sufficient reason, placed next to that people, southward, on the coast, where, twenty miles to the south of Antaradus, and four miles to the north of Orthosia, close upon the shore, was a town called Zimyra, to the site of which the name of Zumrah is still given.

The Arkites, Sinites, Arvadites, and Zemarites, are scarcely mentioned *historically* in the Scriptures: and were it not for the tenth chapter of Genesis, it would be unknown to us that

* 2 Kings xix. 13; Ezek. xxvii. 8. † Also Tartous, anciently Antaradus.
‡ Joseph. Antiq., i. 6, 2. Strabo, Geog., v. 15. Pococke, ii. 27. Volney, ii. 148. Buckingham's 'Arab Tribes,' 523.

they claimed a common origin with the other inhabitants of Canaan. Indeed, their territory can scarcely be considered as within the limits of Canaan Proper; and their distance, as well as their being ranked in the general Phœnician body, with which the relations of the Jews were neutral and sometimes amicable, secured them a happy exemption from that notice in the Sacred Records which would have resulted from such hostile acts as took place between the Jews and the other Canaanitish tribes.

This much may at present suffice concerning the Phœnicians, whose historical importance is of later date than the times of which we now more particularly treat.

Next to the Zemarites, the Hamathites are mentioned in the list through which we are passing; and, on several accounts, we were disposed to include them in the preceding statement as one of the Phœnician tribes; but, as our information concerning the Phœnicians makes it difficult to regard them otherwise than as a people inhabiting the coast, which the Hamathites did not, it seems as well to notice them separately.

Their situation is determined, without any difficulty, by that of the city of Hamath or Hamah, so called after them, and which, after having borne the Greek name of Epiphania, imposed upon it by the Macedonian kings of Syria, has now resumed its ancient name. It is situated sixty miles inland from the Mediterranean, eastward from Antaradus, and not less than 100 miles to the north of Damascus: it was, therefore, distant from the country known to the patriarchs; and, although its territory appears to have reached to some extent southward, it was not involved in those wars which attended the conquest of Palestine by the Hebrew people. Yet, although scarcely more noticed, historically, in Scripture than the kindred tribes which have already passed under our notice, it happens that the *name* of Hamath is of very frequent occurrence there. This is because the territory of the Hamathites lay on the extreme northern border of the Promised Land, whence "the entering in of Hamath" is often mentioned as a point to which the extreme line of northern boundary was drawn. But this boundary appears to have only ceased to be nominal during the reigns of David and Solomon, whose dominion, doubtless, extended to the borders of Hamah, if it did not include a part or the whole of the Hamathite territory.

Hamah is one of those few very ancient towns which still exist as places of some note. It is situated on both sides of the Orontes; and is, for that country, a well-built and comfortable town, the population of which is estimated at 30,000. The town has still, in one sense, a territory, being the seat of a district government, which comprehends 120 inhabited villages, and over seventy or eighty which have been abandoned.*

We have taken the names of the above tribes in the order which their relative situations, in the north, rendered the most convenient. The remainder we shall go through in the order in which the Scriptures enumerate them.

This brings us to the people called "the children of Heth" and the Hittites. They were settled in the southern hills about Hebron and Beersheba. The Hebrew patriarchs had their encampments much in that part of the country, and appear to have lived on good terms with their Hittite neighbours, by whom they were treated with respect and consideration.

The Jebusites, who are more noted in later history than in that of the patriarchs, were seated among the hills to the north of those which the Hittites occupied. Their territory extended to and included the site of Jerusalem, of which, indeed, they appear to have been the founders; but whether before or after the date at which this history commences, we have no means of knowing. But, in a later day, we find them there in a city which they called Jebus, from which it was not until the time of David that they were entirely expelled. That they were able to maintain their post so long in the very heart of a country which the Israelites had subdued, warrants the conclusion that they formed one of the most powerful of the Canaanitish clans.†

The Amorites appear to have been the most powerful and widely spread of the Canaanitish nations. The prophet Amos poetically describes the strength and power of the Amorite, by telling us that his "height was like the height of the cedars, and he was strong as the oaks."

* A larger account of Hamah is given in 'The Pictorial Bible,' under Num. xiii. 21.
† Gen. xv. 19; 2 Sam. v. 6; 1 Chron. xi. 4.

It is, indeed, likely that here, as is certainly the case in other places, such as Gen. xv. 16, the Amorites are taken, by a synecdoche of eminence for all the Canaanitish tribes; but by this fact their superior importance is just as strongly intimated. As this sometimes renders it doubtful whether the proper Amorites may be particularly intended or not, and as they were, moreover, of a remarkably encroaching disposition, it is not quite easy to fix their original seats with precision. It would seem, however, that they were first settled among the mountains to the west of the Dead Sea and of the southern part of the Jordan. While the Israelites were in Egypt, the Amorites crossed the Jordan, and, dispossessing the Moabites and Ammonites of the country between the rivers Jabbock and Arnon, established there an independent kingdom, which the ensuing history will bring conspicuously under our notice. The original seats of the tribe to the west of the Dead Sea and the Jordan were not, however, vacated; but the old and new settlements, separated by the river and the lake, do not appear to have had any dependence on each other. Indeed, it may be important to bear in mind that, in the early ages of which we speak, when the pressure of circumstances drove forth part of a tribe to seek new settlements, the *now* familiar idea of the necessary relations of dependence and subjection on the part of the offset towards the government of the original body, was one that never entered the minds of either. It was a discovery of later ages. This had its advantages; but it had the counterbalancing disadvantage, if it be one, that, seeing that the separation was in every way effectual, and that the emigrants had no right to look to the parent body for protection and support, they were obliged at the outset to be heedful that their own separate resources were adequate to the objects they had in view. Hence, emigrations by tribes or sections of tribes seeking new settlements were only made by large bodies of men, which contained in themselves every provision then thought necessary for independent existence, conquest, self-protection, and self-support. This cause and this effect acted reciprocally on each other, the effect reacting to perpetuate the cause by which it was produced. The strong and vigorous offsets, expecting no assistance and intending no subjection, took care to put themselves above the need of help; and that they did so, prevented the parent state from entertaining any notion that assistance might be called for, and, as a consequence, that subjection might be proper. This was the state of things at the beginning. Colonies had thus no infancy or adolescence, during which it was needful that they should lean upon the parent's supporting arm, till they grew to the full stature of a nation. Yet the several branches of the same family were not unmindful of one another. The relations of the several states springing from the same source, to each other, and to the parent state, appear in general to have been those of friendship and alliance, with a greater readiness to coalesce for common purposes than was usually shown among unrelated tribes.

This statement, though intended for larger application, is introduced here for the immediate purpose of showing how there came to be an independent Amoritish kingdom in the country beyond Jordan. It might even appear from Josh. v. 1, which speaks of "all the kings of the Amorites which were on the side of Jordan westward," that there were several Amoritish monarchies west of the Jordan; but we rather incline to think that this is one of the passages in which the Amorites are named by a synecdoche of eminence for all the kingdoms not included among "the Canaanites which were by the sea" (the Phœnicians) which the context mentions. And yet we think there were several distinct little royalties among them; for if there were thirty-one kingdoms in so small a territory as Palestine, at the time of the conquest by the Hebrews, it seems unquestionable that several of them must have been in the hands of the Amorites, as they were certainly one of the most numerous and important of the families by which the country was originally peopled.

But at the time of the Hebrew conquest, the Amorites had not only extended eastward beyond the Jordan, but westward, towards the Mediterranean. The allotment of Dan, and the western portion of that of Ephraim, extended over the plains and valleys west of the central hills, and their western border approached as near to the sea as the previous occupation of the coast by a powerful people would allow. But we learn from a very instructive passage * that

* Judges i. 34—36.

both the tribes had to contend for this portion of their domain with the Amorites. The Ephraimites, though the most successful, were not able to drive them out, as was their object, but were obliged to be content with making them tributary: but the Danites were entirely kept out of the plain by the Amorites, and obliged to confine themselves to the mountains, in consequence of which a body of them were ultimately compelled to seek out a remote settlement in a part of the country unappropriated by any kindred tribe.

We have been drawn into these anticipatory details by the desire of making the position of this important member of the Canaanitish family clearly understood. It will, however, be borne in mind that much of its relative importance was the growth of a later age than that at which this history commences. *Then* their place seems to have been among the hills bordering on the west the valley of the Jordan, which valley then included the vale of Siddim, afterwards the Asphaltic lake. Consequently their territory closely adjoined that of the children of Heth in one part,—so closely, indeed, that it is not easy to see whether Abraham when encamped at Mamre was a nearer neighbour to the Hittites or to the Amorites. Hebron was not quite a mile from Mamre, and was in the hands of the children of Heth; but Mamre itself was so called after a living Amorite chief of that name, who evidently abode there, or thereabout; for he, with his two brothers, Aner and Eschol, were friends and confederates with Abraham, and joined him in his noted expedition in pursuit of the four kings who had carried Lot away captive. After this, it seems somewhat remarkable that the only hostile transaction (excepting the sad affair at Shechem) in which any of the Hebrew patriarchs appear to have been involved with the people of Canaan, was between Jacob and the Amorites. The circumstance is not historically recorded, nor would it have been known but for the allusion which the patriarch himself makes to it when bestowing his dying blessing upon his favourite son, Joseph, to whom he gives one portion above his brethren, which portion, he says, "I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow."*

Of the Girgashites very little historical notice is taken: indeed we know little more of them than that their name occurs in the list of the nations by which the country was occupied. It is supposed that they were seated along the upper Jordan, and more particularly upon the eastern borders of the lake of Gennesareth. This conclusion is founded chiefly on the fact that this district continued, even in the time of Christ, to bear the name of "the country of the Gergesenes." That we do not meet with them in history among the nations which warred against the Hebrews, the Jewish writers account for by telling us that they evaded the contest, as one from which they had no hope, and emigrated to Africa, where they ultimately settled in a country which from them took the name of Gurgestan.

The Hivites, also called the Avim, are said to have been originally settled in the advantageous district afterwards occupied by the Philistines; on their expulsion from which by that people, they were unable to obtain situations for the whole of their body, and therefore separated, one part of them settling to the north of the Jebusites, in what afterwards became the finest portion of Benjamin's lot, and where, on the return of the Israelites from Egypt, they were in possession of the "great city" of Gibeon, and other important towns. The other portion withdrew to the more vacant territory beyond Jordan, and established itself about Mount Hermon. Some think that the Hivites originally on the coast were wholly destroyed by the Philistines; and that these other settlements—the existence of which is undisputed—had been previously established, and remained undisturbed by that event. But the account which we have given seems to result more clearly from a comparison of the several texts which bear on the subject.†

We have now gone through the list of the families which are expressly described in the tenth chapter of Genesis, as being descended from Canaan, and as occupying the country which received his name. The list is very valuable, if only as enabling us to know, when the name of any clan occurs, whether or not it belonged to the common Canaanitish stock, or was derived from some other source, which knowledge sometimes throws a light upon the transactions in which we find them engaged.

* Gen. xlviii. 22.

† Deut. ii. 23; Josh. ix. 17; x. 2; xi. 3; xiii. 3.

The promise made to Abraham, that his descendants should possess the land in which he was a stranger, gave occasion for the introduction of another enumeration of the clans among whom the country was then divided.* This list differs in several respects from the former, and requires examination.

It *omits* the names of the Sidonians, the Arkites, the Sinites, the Arvadites, the Zemarites, and the Hamathites, as does every other and later list; but, as we have already suggested, they are probably included under the name of Canaanites, which first occurs in the list we are now reviewing, as the name of a section of Canaan's descendants. The name of the Hivites also does not occur in this list; but we shall presently find an account for it.

The names in which this list coincides with the former are those of the Hittites, the Amorites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.

The new names are those of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Perizzites, and the Rephaim, besides that of the Canaanites, to which we have already alluded.

By a process which a note at the end of this chapter (3) explains, we arrive at the conclusion that the Kenites were descended from a branch of the family of Midian, the son of Cush.

The Kenizzites not being mentioned in the list of those nations whom the Hebrews ultimately overcame at the Conquest, it is probable that in the interval they either migrated or were absorbed by some other tribe. Their situation is unknown, and the only inference which looks moderately probable is that which, from their being named between the Kenites and Kadmonites, supposes that they occupied some part of the country beyond Jordan. In that case, it is supposable that they were expelled or absorbed by the Midianites, Moabites, Ammonites, Amorites, or Bashanites, among whom the east country was found to be divided when the Hebrews arrived from Egypt.

As the Hivites are not noticed in this list, though their name occurs in others of later date, and we know historically of their continued existence as a people, it has been rather generally supposed that they are here denoted by the name of Kadmonites. The reason for this is, that the word Kadmonites means Easterlings, or people of the East-country; and we know that some of the Hivites were settled under Mount Hermon, in the north-east. But if we do not consider ourselves bound to account for the omission of the Hivites, and still lay stress upon the *signification* of the name of Kadmonites, it might seem quite as well to understand this as a general term for all the tribes then occupying, or rather living in, the country east of the Jordan. As none of these became of historical note, it might not seem needful to mention them more particularly—the less so as they were all superseded, and other nations, with whom we are made well acquainted, filled their place, at the time the Israelites arrived among them after their years of wandering in the desert. Indeed, from the facility with which Midian, Moab, Ammon, and others, were able to establish themselves " in the east country," it would seem to have been very thinly occupied in, and for some time after, the age of Abraham. The existence of few settled communities in it are intimated; and its chief inhabitants were doubtless the dwellers in tents, who must early have been attracted by the rich pastures which Gilead and Bashan offered to their herds and flocks.

The Perizzites are not named in the original list, in Gen. x. 15—18, of the families descended from Canaan: it is, however, generally concluded that they were real Canaanites, and that the name they bore is rather to be taken as characterizing their mode of life than as indicating their descent. But, even so, interpreters are not quite agreed as to the mode of life which the name of Perizzites indicates. Calmet,† influenced by an erroneous etymology of the word, which makes their name to denote a dispersed people, thinks that they were a pastoral people who traversed the land of Canaan with their flocks, without any fixed habitations. But in Hebrew the word *perazoth* denotes villages, or hamlets, in the open country, in opposition to walled towns; and hence Perizzite, when used otherwise than as a gentile name, describes a dweller in the open country, an inhabitant of such villages, that is, a peasant. Hence the reasonable enough conjecture of Wells‡ and others, that such of the Canaanites in general as lived not in well-frequented towns and cities, but in villages and hamlets about the country, were comprehended under the general name of Perizzites, that is,

* Gen. xv. 19—21. † Hist. de l'Ancien Test. tome i. 61. ‡ Geog. of the Old Test. Pt. i. ch. 8. 51.

villagers or rustics, to whatever particular nation they belonged. The Sacred History notices their presence about Bethel (Gen. xiii. 7), in the northern part of what became the inheritance of Judah (Jud. i. 4, 5), and in the hilly woodlands of central Palestine (Josh. xi. 3; xvii. 15—18); but the incidental indications of history cannot be supposed to show *all* the localities of such a people. That they were a less polite and civilized people than those who dwelt in towns, is probable from the analogy of circumstances; but we abstain from introducing that peculiarly unfavourable character of them which, without any historical warrant, some writers have ventured to draw on the strength of that assumption.

There is happily no difficulty in finding the situation of the Rephaim in the time of Abraham, since we are expressly told (in Gen. xiv. 5) that they abode near Ashteroth Karnaim, or rather, perhaps, about the site on which that city afterwards stood. This was near the eastern border of that portion of the country beyond Jordan which after fell to the lot of the half-tribe of Manasseh. "But," as old Fuller observes, "though here was their principal nest, we find some of their feathers scattered in other places." He alludes to the "valley of the Rephaim" near Jerusalem, through or by which the boundary-line between Judah and Benjamin in after-times passed; and to another in the tribe of Ephraim.* As, however, we do not find them in these situations till the time of Joshua, it is reasonable to infer that the clan, or some sections of it, had, intermediately, migrated thither from their original seats east of the Jordan.

The long list through which we have attended the reader has not yet exhausted the names of the clans seated in and on the borders of Palestine. A few names are added to the list of border-tribes in the brief account which is given, in Gen. xiv., of the expedition of Chedor-laomer and his allies. Happily the passage precludes uncertainty by specifying not only the names of the people, but the situations which they occupied. We are told that the invaders "smote the Rephaims in Ashteroth Karnaim, and the Zuzims in Ham, and the Emims in Shaveh Kiriathaim, and the Hivites in their Mount Seir, unto El-paran, which is by the wilderness. And they returned, and came to Enmishpat, which is in Kadesh, and smote all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites that dwelt in Hazezon-tamar." In this passage all the names, except those of the Rephaim and Amorites, are such as have not previously occurred.

In the preceding page the conjecture has been offered that the term Kadmonites, or "Easterlings," was probably used as a general name for all the tribes east of the river Jordan; and it may then be said that the names of the Rephaim, the Emim, and the Zumim, were those of particular tribes comprehended under that general denomination. At all events it is certain that they were all seated in the country east of the Jordan.

As to the Rephaim, our previous statement shows that they were in the country which afterwards formed the kingdom of Og king of Bashan. With respect to the Emim, we have, in Deut. ii., very clear information. Moses, speaking to the Israelites while they were in the plains of Moab, before crossing the Jordan, and looking back to the times of which we now treat—times anterior to the existence of even the founder of the Moabites, says, "the Emim dwelt therein (in the land of Moab) in times past, a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakim; which also were accounted giants, as the Anakim; but the Moabites call them Emim." From this it is clear that in the patriarchal times they dwelt in the country which the Hebrews found in the occupation of the Moabites when they marched through it on their way to the Jordan.

The Jewish writers, with the greatest probability, conclude that the Zuzim of Gen. xiv. are the same as the Zamzummim of Deut. ii. From the mention of them in the latter chapter, they appear to have been a very similar people to the Emim. Speaking of the land occupied by the descendants of Ammon, the brother of Moab, Moses observes, on the same occasion as that which supplies the former statement, "That also was accounted a land of giants; giants dwelt therein of old time; and the Ammonites called them Zamzummim; a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakim; but the LORD destroyed them before them; and

* Compare Josh. xv. 8; xvii. 15; and 2 Sam. v. 18. Our public translation, however, instead of preserving Rephaim as a gentile name, *translates* it into "giants"—"the valley of the giants"—"the land of the giants."

they succeeded them and dwelt in their stead." This information concerning the Emim and Zumim is very clear, and needs no elucidation; and as they are not again mentioned in the patriarchal history, and were destroyed before the Hebrews arrived from Egypt, we shall not have any future occasion to notice them, unless in connexion with some inquiry concerning giants, which the progress of this work will render necessary. At present it is only requisite to direct the attention of the reader to the fact that there is no force or meaning in the plainest and most literal language, if the passages which we have cited do not state that there were some gigantic races among the early generations of men. Here and elsewhere, however, we are informed of their destruction or gradual extinction; so that of "the races of the giants," only a few individuals, and they of one family, appear to have remained to the time of David. But we must not anticipate an inquiry reserved for a future page.

The history of the Horites in Seir is very similar to that of the people of whom we have just spoken. They occupied the mountains of Seir in the time of Abraham, but were ultimately dispossessed by the descendants of his own grandson, Esau, the father of the Edomites, who will, hereafter, often come historically under our notice. This information we also obtain from Deut. ii., where we are told that the Lord destroyed the Horites before the children of Esau which dwelt in Seir; "and they succeeded them and dwelt in their stead." A slight variation in the phraseology of this statement, as compared with the others, intimates that when the Edomites extirpated the Horites, they had previously dwelt among them: and, correspondingly, we find that Esau had established himself, as a powerful chieftain in Seir, by the time that Jacob returned from Mesopotamia; and the further information, now given, intimates that, when his posterity and retainers felt themselves strong enough, they rose against the old inhabitants, overthrew them, and established their own sovereignty over the mountains. It seems possible to collect from the remarkable but obscure details in Gen. xxxvii., that the Edomites lived in a part of Mount Seir in independence, under a government of their own, for some time before they were able to establish their dominion over all the mountains; or, in other words, there seems clear intimation that the Edomites and Horites divided the possession of Seir between them until the former became strong enough to add the portion of the Horites to their own, reducing the whole to their single dominion. It is also a very singular circumstance that the chapter to which we refer gives an account, not only of the posterity of Edom, but of that of "Seir the Horite:" from which last phrase it would seem that Seir, from whom the mountains generally took their names, was no other than a very eminent man among the descendants of Hor. It is a very striking instance of the tenacity with which the most ancient names cling to the sites on which they were originally imposed, that, while the names of Esau and his descendants cannot be recognised in those which any of the sites and conspicuous points in these mountains bear, the older names of Hor and of Seir himself are well preserved to this day. Now, as in the time of the patriarchs, the range, or a most important part of it, bears the name of Mount Seir, in the softened form of Mount Shera, and now, as in the time of Moses, the most conspicuous summit—that on which Aaron died—bears the name of Mount Hor. A thousand similar instances occur, in which the new or repeatedly altered names, imposed by successive conquerors and overthrowers, are quite forgotten, and the venerable old patriarchal names, which the first inhabitants of the earth bestowed, are alone remembered by the people of the land.

The mention of the Amalekites in the account of Chedorlaomer's expedition would not, to the general reader, appear to suggest any difficulty. But a difficulty has arisen from the incompatibility of this fact with the received opinion concerning the origin of the Amalekites. No *person* of the name of Amalek is mentioned in Scripture save a *grandson* of Esau;* and *therefore* it has been concluded that this Amalek was the founder of the Amalekites; and the difficulty which is offered to this conclusion by the fact that the Amalekites are mentioned as a people many years before even Esau, the grandfather of this Amalek, was born, is got over by the convenient conjecture that the Amalekites are mentioned proleptically in the time of Abraham, and that "the country of the Amalekites" means no more than the country which the Amalekites ultimately occupied. To such a hypothesis we should not at all object, if we

* Gen. xxxvi. 12.

saw any real necessity for it,—that is, if some fact or circumstance mentioned in history could not be understood without such an explanation. But this is very far from being the case in the present instance. Here we have a simple historical fact recorded, and there we have a conjecture founded on the mere occurrence of a name; and that the fact should give place to the conjecture, instead of the conjecture being held untenable, because incompatible with the fact, is a course which appears to require much stronger reasons than any which can be adduced in the present instance. Indeed, were the alternatives opposing facts, instead of conjecture opposed to fact, the collateral evidence which must decide between equally balanced alternatives seems far more in favour of the earlier origin of the Amalekites than of their descent from Esau, and renders it a far more reasonable conclusion that Esau's grandson was named after the founder of a neighbouring people, already powerful, than that he was himself the progenitor of a nation so proverbially powerful as the Amalekites were at the time that the Israelites departed from Egypt. As this people make a considerable figure in the following history, it has seemed proper to make these observations on their origin, on which subject some further information may be found in the second note. Such particulars as are known of their history will transpire in the course of the historical narrative. And it is only necessary to add in this place that the territory which they overspread appears to have extended from the heart of the Sinai peninsula northward, along the borders of the desert towards the southern frontier of Palestine.

In the early history of Palestine there is no people, after the Hebrews, who come more frequently under our notice, and in whose proceedings we take greater interest, than the Philistines. Their importance is indicated by the simple fact that the country derived from this people the name of PALESTINE, which it had acquired as early as the departure of Israel from Egypt. In the notice of the Hivites it has been already shown that the Philistines were not one of the original nations of Canaan, but they obtained a settlement there by the expulsion of the Hivites. Their *previous* history has been a subject of much discussion, and offers a matter of curious inquiry, to which we shall not be inattentive; but we find that a subsequent page will afford a more suitable opportunity than the present for the introduction of the observations which a careful examination of the subject may enable us to offer; and what we may then state will become much clearer to the reader through various particulars which the course of the narrative will intermediately require us to produce.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES.

(1) "CHRONOLOGY," p. 3.—Some of the dates given in the text will not fail to strike the reader as very different from those to which he is most accustomed, as occurring in the margin of our Bibles. They are derived from Dr. Hales. As this computation adds no less than 1407 years to the age of the world, and as it involves the necessity of considerable trouble in its application to historical uses, it will easily be believed that we have only determined to adopt it after very anxious consideration and strict examination of the evidence on which it stands.

But although it is now first adopted formally in a regular history, such of our readers as have paid the least attention to the subject will not regard it as a very startling innovation. The question between the shorter and longer chronologies has been so often and so largely discussed, and the evidence in favour of the longer has acquired such strength, and has, lastly, been so clearly set forth by Dr. Hales, that only the disposition to acquiesce in that which has received the sanction of time and of general use, together with the labour which the alteration involves, can adequately account for the retention of the shorter system by historical writers, some of whom have, indeed, not retained it without recording their convictions in favour of the computation which, in practice, they were too indolent or too timid to adopt. Its historical adoption now, in a work of this nature, does not require much courage, nor can be regarded as a measure of doubtful propriety: for we believe the time is fully come, in which no writer need be anxious for anything more than the solid truth of that opinion or system to which he declares his adherence. And for the present question in particular, it is so far fortunate, that no point of faith is involved in the shorter chronology, and that those who have disputed its claims

and advocated its rejection, have all been, to a man, persons of eminent orthodoxy. This is particularly the case with the distinguished chronologer and eminent scholar by whom the claims of the longer system have been elucidated beyond all possibility of future observation; and those whom some fanciful and suspicious speculations of Dr. Hales may have induced to examine his chronological principles more guardedly than they might otherwise have deemed necessary, will feel proportionate satisfaction in rising from the inquiry with the most entire conviction that his conclusions, with respect to the Scriptural chronology, have been founded on a rock, and can never be overthrown. To ourselves it will be a particular satisfaction, if our adoption of the larger computation helps in any degree to bring it into more general use, seeing that there are few studious men who do not now accept its guidance in their private historical or chronological researches.

As there will probably be among our readers some who have but little acquaintance with this really important subject, a slight explanation may be considered necessary.

Our information concerning the age of the world, and of the interval between the different great epochs in its history, is necessarily derived, in the earlier portions, entirely from the materials which the Scriptures supply. The first information is supplied by genealogies, which ascend as high as the first man. They tell us at what age he begat a son, how long after he survived, and the number of the years he lived: the same information is supplied concerning his son, and so on through many generations. By adding these particulars together, we have a clear and unquestionable estimate of the whole duration of time over which they extend; and as we know the ages of particular persons, we also know the date of such events as are said to have occurred in some particular year of their lives. Information of this kind comes down to the more proper historical data, in which we compute time by adding together the particulars which inform us, successively, of the durations of captivities, wanderings, reigns, and governments. If, in the same time, genealogies occur, and the intervals between two great events happen to be specified, these are valuable materials whereby to test or corroborate the deductions from historical data. It is by this process that the duration of the interval between the creation and the birth of Christ, and the respective dates of the various events which that grand interval embraces, have been determined.

The process is clear enough, but not so its particular applications and developments. We are, undoubtedly, to follow implicitly the Sacred Scriptures; but the difficulty is in ascertaining what the Scriptures really do state, and in collecting and combining the information which they intend to convey.

At the outset there is this great difficulty, that the present Masorete copies of the Hebrew Scriptures differ very greatly from the Septuagint and from Josephus. The Samaritan Pentateuch differs from the Hebrew in some important particulars; its estimate of the antediluvian generations is shorter than even that of the Hebrew; and, although its estimate of the postdiluvian is higher, the resulting effect leaves it with the Hebrew as affording an estimate more than 1000 years less than that which the Septuagint and Josephus require. The two latter do not exactly coincide, but they approach so nearly, and so easy to detect and remove the cause of difference, that their testimony may be regarded as one. But to explain all this the more clearly, we must give the reader some idea of the discrepancies and analogies of the various computations, before that period at which they came to an agreement. This is best done by stating the intervals which they respectively place between certain marked epochs. We have included the computation of Archbishop Usher, founded on the Hebrew text, as his account is that which is most generally received, and has been adopted in our Bibles.

	Hebrew: Vulgar Account.			Hebrew: Usher's Account.			Samaritan.			Septuagint: Alexandrine.			Josephus, as corrected by Hales.		
	A. M.	B. C.	Interval	A. M.	B. C.	Interv.	A. M.	B. C.	Interv.	A. M.	B. C.	Interv.	A. M.	B. C.	Interv.
Creation. . . .	1	3760	—	1	4004	—	1	4305	—	1	5508	—	1	5411	—
Deluge	1656	2104	1656	1656	2348	1656	1307	2998	1307	2262	3246	2262	2256	3155	2256
Call of Abraham .	2018	1742	362	2083	1922	426	2384	1921	1077	3469	2039	1207	3318	2093	1062
Exode	2448	1312	430	2513	1491	430	2814	1491	430	3894	1614	425	3764	1648	445
Solomon's Temple founded . . .	2928	832	480	2992	1012	480	3294	1011	480	4495	1013	601	4184	1027	621
Solomon's Temple destroyed . .	3338	422	410	3396	588	424	3718	587	424	4919	589	424	4825	586	441
Birth of Christ. .	3760	—	422	4004	—	588	4305	—	587	5508	—	589	5411	—	586

In this table the Samaritan and Septuagint accounts are extracted from tables in the valuable Preface to the Ancient Universal History, and the others are derived from Hales, with the addition of the "intervals." The materials for comparison which the table offers are well worthy of consideration. It will be seen that the Samaritan makes a much nearer general approximation to the Hebrew than to the Septuagint or Josephus; it makes a much shorter estimate of the interval between the creation and the deluge than any of even the Hebrew accounts; but, on the other hand, it gives a computation of the interval between the deluge and the call of Abraham so much longer than that of the Hebrew, as very nearly approximates to the generally longer reckoning of the Septuagint and Josephus. It is important to observe that the Hebrew stands alone in its brief estimate of this most important period. The astonishing difference of 1748 years between the highest and lowest accounts, contained in the Table, of the era of the creation, will appear a very strong discrepancy; yet these are by no means the extreme points at which that era has been estimated. Alphonso, King of Castile, reckons the date of the creation at 6984 B.C., and Rabbi Lippman computes it at 3616 B.C., the difference being 3370 years!

The reader will already have discovered that those who follow the Hebrew text, as it now stands, are not at all agreed in the computations which they found upon it. The lowest estimate from this source has just been given; the highest is that of the Seder Olam Sutha, or 'Small Chronicle of the World,' published about A.D. 1121, which dates the creation B.C. 4359.

Now, taking the Hebrew and the Septuagint as the representatives, respectively, of the shorter and longer estimates, it is quite evident that one of them must have been corrupted. It is also clear that this corruption took place, not only after the birth of Christ, but after Jerusalem was destroyed; for Josephus clearly testifies that when he wrote, towards the end of the first century, the Hebrew and the Septuagint were in perfect chronological accordance; and, at a somewhat earlier date, Philo gave his valuable evidence to the same effect. The motive by which such a corruption may have been induced is easily found. The Jews had a cherished tradition that the Messiah was to appear about the middle of the sixth millenary age of the world: at that time Christ did, in fact, appear, according to the longer chronology, and that this, their own tradition, was alleged against them by the early Christians, supplied a motive for the Jews to tamper with the Scriptural genealogies, whereby they might contend that he appeared much *before* the expected time, and show that they still had ground for expecting the Messiah. That the Jews had this tradition we know; and we also know that their writers have often availed themselves of this argument, founded on the present state of the Hebrew text. That, in their bitter enmity to Christ, they would not much scruple at such a proceeding, we can learn from contemporary authorities (Justin Martyr, for instance), who distinctly charge them with altering or erasing passages in their Scriptures which the Christians were in the habit of adducing to prove that Christ was the Messiah foretold by the prophets.

If, then, the Jews desired to alter the genealogies, it was much easier for them to do so in the Hebrew than in the Septuagint. The copies of the former had become scarce during the wars, and the comparatively few remaining copies belonged to the synagogues or were in the hands of learned Jews, the Hebrew of the Bible being then a dead language; whereas the Septuagint being in a living language, extensively understood, the copies were numerous, a great number of them in the hands of Christians, and many, probably, even in the libraries of the curiously-learned heathen. The Jews could hardly at that time falsify the Septuagint, but they could the Hebrew, and then appeal to its superior authority to throw discredit on the Septuagint. And that this was actually done appears from the statement of Eusebius, that, even so late as his time, the longer chronology had not wholly disappeared from the Hebrew Bibles; some of which then had the shorter and others the longer account, agreeing with the Septuagint. The Hebrew text, as it now stands, also offers not a few internal evidences of alteration, some very conclusive instances of which Dr. Hales has pointed out.

But it may further be shown that the Hebrew chronology is irreconcilable with probability and fact. Eusebius well remarks, "The error of the Jewish Hebrew text is evident from this,—that it makes Abraham and Noah contemporaries, which is inconsistent with all history; for since, according to the Hebrew text, there were not more than 292 years from the flood to the birth of Abraham, and since, according to the same text, Noah survived the flood 350 years, it follows that he lived to the 58th year of Abraham."

To this judicious remark Hales adds:—

"Upon this supposition, idolatry must have begun and prevailed, and the patriarchal government have been overthrown by Nimrod and the builders of Babel, during the life-time

of the second founder of the human race, and his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japhet.

"If Shem lived until the 110th year of Isaac and the 50th year of Jacob, why was not he included in the covenant of circumcision made with Abraham and his family?—or why is he utterly unnoticed in their history?

"How could the earth be so populous in Abraham's days, or how could the kingdoms of Assyria, Egypt, &c., be established so soon after the deluge?" This last difficulty was strongly felt by Sir Walter Raleigh, who, in his 'History of the World' remarks, "In this patriarch's time all the then parts of the world were peopled; all nations and countries had their kings; Egypt had many magnificent cities, and so had Palestine, and all the neighbouring countries; yea, all that part of the world besides, as far as India: and these, not built with sticks, but of hewn stone and with ramparts; which magnificence needed a parent of more antiquity than those other men have supposed." In another place he forcibly observes, "If we advisedly consider the state and countenance of the world, such as it was in Abraham's time, yea, before his birth, we shall find it were very ill done, by following opinion without the guide of reason, to pare the times over-deeply between the flood and Abraham; because in cutting them too near the quick, the reputation of the whole story might perchance bleed." And it has bled. The sagacity of this accomplished man did not erroneously anticipate that "the scorners" would not fail to detect and make the most of the great and serious difficulties which the shorter chronology creates, but which by the longer computation are wholly obviated.

After all this, we trust it will be felt that we have done well, and taken a safe course, in adopting the longer account for the present work; and we do not regret that the explanation which thus became necessary has afforded an opportunity of bringing so important a subject under the notice of many whose attention may not hitherto have been directed towards it.

It only remains to state why the reckoning of Josephus in particular has been chosen.

It is perhaps scarcely necessary to remind the reader that the account of that great historian is not a system of his own, but a statement of the interpretation, received in his time, of the account which the Scriptures gave. The Scripture is still the authority; and Josephus is the witness of the testimony which it bore before any disagreement on the subject existed, and when the accounts of the Hebrew and the Septuagint synchronized. The system is that of the Bible, and Josephus becomes the agent through which its uncorrupted statements may be recovered. His particulars evince great skill in reconciling *apparent* discrepancies, and in eliciting that which, when clearly stated, appears at once to be the sense which the Scriptures convey, and which is in perfect agreement with every fact and circumstance which it records. Besides this, he gives sums and results collected from the Scriptures; and how important such materials are as tests, and as means of comparison and verification, no one who has given the least attention to such subjects needs be told. It is true that his numbers also have been much corrupted, in order to bring them into agreement with the Hebrew account; but, happily, enough of sums and dates escaped the general spoliation, to afford materials for the detection of the alterations, and the restoration of the original numbers. In some cases, where the sum had been altered, the particulars sufficed to render the alteration manifest; but more generally a number of sums which, having been stated incidentally, had escaped the general havoc, evinced the alteration of the details, and at the same time offered a firm basis for the restoration of the original edifice, which had been disfigured in some parts, and demolished in others, to the grievous injury of the builder's reputation. The beautifully connected chain of analytical and synthetical argument, by which Dr. Hales has effected this restoration, may, as one of the finest pieces of reasoning we possess, be recommended to the admiration even of those who feel but little interest in the subject to which it refers.

([2]) "Canaanites," p. 4.—In stating that the original settlements of the descendants of Canaan were on the Arabian coast of the Red Sea, we have adopted the well-supported opinion of Professor Jahn.* The necessary statement on this subject has the incidental merit of giving a much clearer and satisfactory account of the Amalekites than it is possible otherwise to obtain. This very learned and acute Biblical archeologist says:—"The Canaanites frequently occur in the Arabian poets, historians, and scholiasts, under the name of Amalekites (*Imilkôn* and *Amalikôn*), as a very ancient, numerous, and celebrated people, who inhabited Arabia before the Joktanites, and some of whom removed to Canaan, whence they were expelled by the Hebrews. Herodotus also says that the Phœnicians (who are the same as the Canaanites) originally dwelt on the coasts of the Red Sea, whence they

* Biblische Archaologie, th. ii., b. 1; Politische Alterthumer, sect. 4. Wien., 1824 This (the historical) portion of Jahn's great work on Biblical Antiquities has been translated in America, and reprinted in this country, under the title of "The History of the Hebrew Commonwealth."

emigrated to the Mediterranean, and there engaged in navigation to distant countries.* We are informed in Genesis that when Abraham arrived in Canaan the Canaanite was then in the land; a plain intimation that the Canaanites had emigrated thither not long before. The enumeration of the Canaanites among the Amalekites who inhabited Arabia Petræa, but made distant excursions into other countries, is also an indication that Arabia was their original residence.†

The Canaanites who remained in Arabia formed a numerous people, of whom, in the seventh century, there were distinguished families still in existence. They could not be descended from Amalek the grandson of Esau, as they are spoken of long before his time as inhabiting the southern borders of Canaan. Balaam calls them one of the most ancient nations, and their king the most powerful monarch that he knew. For the offence of attacking the rear of the Hebrews in their march through Arabia Petræa, they received immediate punishment, but those Hebrews who attempted to penetrate into Canaan, contrary to the command of God, they defeated, and formed an alliance in later times with the Moabites and Ammonites, and also with the Midianites, against that people. They were vanquished by Saul, by David, and finally by the Simeonites, in the reign of Hezekiah. Being nomades, and subsisting principally by tillage, they led a wandering life, though we find them, for the most part, on the southern borders of Palestine.

(3) "MIDIANITES, KENITES," &c., p. 12.—The inference that the Kenites were a family of Midianites is derived from the circumstance that Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, is called both a Midianite and a Kenite. And then as we know that one nation of Midianites were descended from a son of Cush, they could not be a subdivision of the Kenites, but the Kenites of them. But there are *two* Midians, and two nations of Midianites mentioned in Scripture, and the question arises to which of these Jethro, who is also called a Kenite, belonged.

The older nation, which alone could have existed in the time of Abraham, is so constantly associated in Scripture with the Cushites ("Ethiopians" in our version) as to suggest that they were descended from Cush, the son of Ham, through some one of his descendants who was called Midian. It is true that no such name occurs in the list of the sons and grandsons of Cush which the tenth chapter of Genesis contains; but we are scarcely to suppose that this list gives the names of all the first fathers of mankind; and the founder of the Midianites may have been a great grandson of Cush. As it is scarcely worth while to enter into all the arguments for the existence of a race of Cushite Midianites, we may state that the evidence for the fact is so clear, that the conclusion has generally been formed and admitted on its own grounds, without reference to any controversy or discussion.

The later Midianites were descended from Abraham himself, through his son Midian by his second wife Keturah. Now, although the Kenites were a Midianitish people, it is evident they could not be from this family, seeing that they are named in Scripture many years before even Midian their founder was born. And this, by the by, is an argument for the existence of a race of Cushite Midianites before Abraham's son existed.

To weaken this argument it has been, however, alleged that the Kenites are, in the list under review, named proleptically, as a people who should be in possession of a territory at the time when Abraham's posterity should arrive to take possession of the Promised Land. But an easy answer is found to this in the fact that no instance of a proleptical insertion occurs in any of these lists. The case indeed is so much the reverse, that all the apparent discrepancies between the lists arise from there being nothing in them either proleptical or retrospective. In all cases we are furnished the existing names of the clans actually in occupation at the time the list is given. Hence every fresh list is indicative of the changes which had taken place since the previous one was supplied. If a name has been changed, the old one is dropped and the new one given: if a name once current has been lost, from whatever cause, it is omitted in the new list; and if a new name has arisen by division, intrusion, or change of place, it fails not to be inserted. It will therefore appear most unlikely that the name of the Kenites should form the only exception to this general course of proceeding.

Furthermore, that the Kenites mentioned to Abraham were not his own descendants proleptically named, might, at the very first view, be suspected from the fact that all the tribes whose lands were promised to his posterity were descended from Ham, and that a branch of his own descendants should be included, or, in other words, that one branch of his descendants should take away the lands of another

* Herodot. i. 2; compare Justin, Frag. xviii. 3; Abulfede, Descript. Syria, p. 5.
† Gen. xi. 10—26; Pocock, Specimen Hist. Arab., p. 30; Herbelot, Bible Orient., t. i. p. 215; Reland, Palæs. p. 82; Gen. xii. 6, xiii. 7, xxvi. 34, xxviii. 8; Num. xiii. 29; Psa. lxxxiii.; compare Deut. iii., Josh. xii. and xiii. 2—32.

branch, might not have seemed very desirable to him. If the inheritances of Moab and Ammon were respected for the sake of Lot's relationship to Abraham, how much more would the inheritance of Midian be respected as that of the immediate son, though not the heir, of the great patriarch.

To this we may add that the Abrahamic Midianites settled to the east and south-east of the Dead Sea, between Moab and Edom; whereas the principal locality of the other Midianites was on the Red Sea to the south of Edom; and it is there to whom, historically, the name of Kenites is also given; and that these were Cushites is, in addition to what we have already said, strongly intimated in the fact that the daughter of Jethro, a great man among the Midianitish Kenites, is called a Cushite also, by Aaron and Miriam. (Num. xii. 1.)

It appears that they occupied, or rather were in the country extending from the south of Palestine into Arabia Petræa and the borders of the Red Sea. The intimations to this effect are not very precise; and this may be partly because the Kenites appear to have been a roving pastoral people, not dwelling in towns, and therefore more dispersed than the proper Canaanitish tribes. At the Hebrew conquest we find a very distinguished Kenite, Heber, living in tents in the very heart of Palestine, much in the same way, apparently, that the Hebrew patriarchs did before, and as the Arabs do now in the same country, and the Eelauts in Persia. No doubt this was the case with other clans of the same people, and that, too, at a late date: for the kindness of a Kenite family to Moses, during his exile, was only not an ultimate benefit to that family, but secured from molestation such of the tribes as chose to submit to the Hebrews. Such of them as did not, probably joined the Edomites and Amalekites; for we know that it was their practice to associate with more powerful tribes in times of difficulty, by which means their distinct existence was in the end lost. From the top of the mountain to which the king of Moab called Balaam to view and curse the camp of Israel, that prophet was able to view the place of those Kenites who held aloof from the Hebrews. He mentions them along with Amalek and Edom, and intimates that they abode in caverns: "He looked upon the Kenites . . and said, Strong is thy dwelling place, and thou puttest thy nest in a rock."* But it is rather uncertain whether we are to infer from this that those of the Kenites who were near the Dead Sea and Seir sought the limited shelter which people of their habits required in the caverns which abound in the mountains of that neighbourhood, in preference to living in tents; or that they had taken refuge in them under the pressure of existing circumstances, when they were in dread of the Hebrews. The former seems probable enough, particularly since the caverns are described as their "dwelling places."

As merely relating to so obscure a people as the Kenites, the remarks we have hazarded might seem of undue length, but will not appear to be the case when it is recollected that the subject has necessarily involved an exposition of our views concerning the Midianites, who are of much more importance than the Kenites alone, and more frequently mentioned in the History of the Jews.

* Num. xxiv. 21.

CHAPTER II.

ABRAHAM.



[Bedouin Encampment.]

At the time which we have already indicated, the postdiluvian fathers had long been dead.* While they lived, and while the flood and its causes were still fresh in the memories of men, the knowledge of the one true God appears to have remained clear, and uncorrupted by the devices of the imagination. The wild undertaking at Babel was a strong act of human madness and of daring pride; but, although it proceeded on most mistaken notions of the character and power of God, there is no indication that any measure of idolatry was involved in that strange deed. The ensuing confusion of tongues may have tended, in its ultimate effects—by obstructing communications between the several tribes of men—to obscure the knowledge of the facts and doctrines which Noah and his sons had transmitted from the times before the flood. It could have had no immediate and direct effect; but it is easy to see that in time it must have put the several tribes in a better condition for *forgetting* that knowledge which had ceased to be the common property of one language. Judging from the slight indications which the Scriptures offer, as well as from the analogous facts which it records, it would seem that the principles of social and moral conduct were corrupted much sooner than the abstract belief in the unity and providence of God: but the former corruption, doubtless, hastened the latter, it

* This results from the chronology we have chosen. According to the shorter account, the sons of Noah were alive long after the call of Abraham, and Noah himself had died but a few years before.

being not more true that "a reprobate mind" results from the dislike of men "to retain God in their knowledge," than that the pre-existence of the reprobate mind produces that dislike.

It is rather remarkable that the same country which witnessed the mad speculation of the builders at Babel and the primitive tyranny of Nimrod, is also that in which the first corruptions of religious opinion appear to have arisen. When the early inhabitants of Chaldea beheld, in their most beautiful sky, "the sun when it shined, and the moon walking in brightness," their hearts were "secretly enticed" to render to the creature the worship and honour due only to the Creator. This is the testimony of all antiquity, which mentions no idolatrous worship as of earlier date than that of Chaldea. And this is also, indirectly, the testimony of Scripture. In all the history of Abraham there is not the least intimation of the existence of idolatry or any idolatrous usage among any of the various peoples in whose territories he sojourned. It is clearly intimated of some of them that they worshipped Jehovah, and it is implied of others in the manner in which they mention his name: but that idolatry was practised in Chaldea before Abraham departed to the land of Canaan, and even that Abraham's family, if not himself, participated in that idolatry, is clearly stated by Joshua in his charge to the Israelites, when he says to them, "Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood [Euphrates] in old time, even Terah the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: *and they served other gods.*" (xxiv. 2.) This settles the question as to Terah himself; and the Jews have a tradition which, as usual, *improves* considerably upon the scriptural intimation, by stating that Terah was not only an idolater, but an idolatrous priest, and a maker of idols. This conclusion appears to have been founded on the impression that the *teraphim*, the earliest manufactured objects of superstition mentioned in Scripture, took their name from Terah; a conjecture that has seemed the more probable from the fact, that the teraphim are first brought under our notice as being in the possession of that branch of Terah's descendants which remained in Mesopotamia. But it is enough to know that before the time of Abraham, or, at least, in his early years, "other gods" than Jehovah were served beyond the great river, and that the family of Abraham concurred in that service. But that *idol* worship, in the restricted sense, as meaning the worship of images, was then known, is not very probable, and is, at least, incapable of proof. Men do not suddenly fall into so low a deep as this. The sun, the moon, the host of heaven, were the first of those "other gods" which attracted their admiration, secretly enticed their hearts, and, first, divided, and, in the end, entirely engrossed their reverence. To *images* they had not yet descended; or, if they had "teraphim," it may be well doubted that these were idols for worship, in the usual sense of the expression.

It may also be questioned whether, at this time, even the servers of other gods beyond the Euphrates had altogether ceased to serve, according to their own views, the God of their fathers. The first steps from good to bad are, not to reject the good, but to join that which is bad unto it. To forget God, and formally to deny him, were impossible as first acts of corruption. The first act of the mistaken mind was, doubtless, after the knowledge of his character and attributes had become faint, to regard him, not as a God at hand, but as a God afar off—removed too far from them by the ineffable sublimity of his essence, to be reasonably expected to concern himself in the small affairs of this world and its people. Yet, feeling that the world needed that government which they deemed Him too high to exercise, they imagined that, far below him, but far above themselves, there might be agents by whom the government of the universe was administered, and to whom even man might make the smallest of his wants and his humblest desires known without presumption. Seeking these agents, they looked first upon the sun,

> "—— that, with surpassing glory crown'd,
> Look'd from his sole dominion, like the god
> Of this new world,"

and deeming that they had found in him the chief of the agents which they sought, he became the object of their admiring reverence. To the sun was added the moon, and, in time, the principal of the stars; and he who has considered well the human heart, can readily conceive that the originators of this intermediate worship may have imagined that they did God service, that it magnified his greatness, and shewed a humbling sense of their own insignificance

before him, when they intrusted to inferior hands the interests which they held to be much below his attention, and withdrew themselves afar off from the effulgence of his presence. But under such a system, or under any system which takes from the Almighty the government of the world, the honour due to him must need sink before long into a simple recognition of his existence; and even this truth must in the end fade from the general mind, and exist only as a cold speculative dogma, known only to the higher theologians,—a secret, whispered, in mystery and fear, to the chosen few, in groves, and caverns, and solitary places. All true and living worship can only come from the heart which is moved by love, hope, gratitude, or fear, and can only be rendered to one from whose beneficence blessings are hoped or have been received, or from whose anger evils are feared; and to make the Almighty other than this, under whatever self-deluding pretence of enhancing his glory, was really to render his sovereignty barren and nominal, and, as far as man might, to depose him from his kingly throne—the heart of man—and take his glory from him. Therefore, God, knowing this inevitable result, at all times, rejected with indignation the agents or helpers to whom men were willing to ascribe some part of that honour which he only could claim. Hence, the grand interdiction on this subject, which he gave in later days to the house of Israel, struck at the beginnings of the evil. It said not, "Thou shalt have no other god *instead of* me;" but, "Thou shalt have no other gods before (or *with*, or *besides*) me."

The worship of other gods having thus been established, and God, foreknowing that it would overspread the earth, in such sort that he would be almost forgotten among the race which owed to him the breath of life, delayed not to take such measures as seemed best to his wisdom, to preserve his testimony among the nations until the arrival of that "time of refreshing" which he had pre-determined, and the coming of which he made known with increasing distinctness as its date approached. To this end he determined to make one nation the steward of those great truths which were to become mysteries to the world at large—his unity, his supremacy, his providence, and to whom the hope of a future great deliverer might be committed. His unity he would impress upon them by repeated declarations, and by the abhorrent rejection and punishment of all attempts to associate other gods with him: his supremacy, by the overthrow of idolaters and their idols, and by the demonstration that the powers of nature were the creatures of his will; and his providence—his universal rule, for which nothing is too high, and from which nothing is exempt—at first, by occasional appearances, and, at last, by abiding manifestations of his presence among them. Thus to keep ever before them the truth that he was a God at hand and not a God afar off, and to compel them to remember, not only that "he is, but that he is a rewarder of those that diligently seek him," he would constitute himself the Legislator and King of this peculiar people—as a Legislator, he would give them a code of laws which should keep them apart from all other nations till the object was accomplished; and while, as a King, he directed all public measures, and rewarded public virtue and punished public guilt, he would make it manifest that his care extended to the meanest of his subjects, and that while he dwelt among them in his high and holy place, he was not less present with the man of humble and contrite spirit.

To accomplish these objects, the Almighty did not see fit to make choice of any existing nation; but to give a nation existence, and to watch over it from its birth, subjecting its infancy to his guidance and instruction, and forming its character and condition with a view to the great final objects of its being.

Separately from these considerations, the history of this peculiar people cannot well be understood. To write their history is one chief part of the duty we have undertaken; and that history is first the history of one man, then of a family, and then of a nation.

In the district of northern Mesopotamia which is called in Scripture "Ur of the Chaldees,"(1) being apparently the large and fertile plain of Osroene, dwelt a wealthy pastoral family, descended, in the line of Heber, from Shem the son of Noah. The living head of this family was that Terah whom we have already found occasion to name. This man had three sons, Haran, Nahor, and Abram. Of these sons the last-named was the youngest, having been borne by Terah's second wife, fully sixty years later than Haran his elder brother.(2) Haran died prematurely in the land of his nativity, leaving one son named Lot, and two daughters called

Milcah and Sarai. According to the custom of those times, the two surviving sons of Terah married the daughters of their dead brother; Milcah becoming the wife of Nahor, and Sarai being married to Abram.(3)

Abram, the youngest son of this family, is the person—the one man—with whom the history of the Hebrew people commences; for on him the Almighty saw proper to confer the high distinction of setting himself and his future race apart among the nations, in fulfilment of the great object which we have already indicated.

The fame which this appointment has brought upon the name of this great patriarch has produced much anxious inquiry into that part of his history which transpired before our more authentic and undoubted records introduce him to our knowledge, which is not until he was sixty years of age. The traditions of the Jews and Arabians speak much of his early life; but our certain information offers only the few facts of parentage and connection which we have just supplied.

It thus also occurs, in many other cases, that such traditions supply much information which the Scriptures do not offer; and it then becomes an anxious question to the historian, how far they may be accepted as materials for history. That they are not to be wholly disregarded, may be inferred from the circumstance that the Scripture does itself sometimes make allusions to facts, concerning persons and events of former ages, which the Scriptural accounts of them do not preserve, while yet these facts are alluded to as matters of current knowledge. It is, however, the peculiar felicity of a historian of the Jews, that he has for the basis of his narrative materials of unquestioned truth, which it is not needful for him to test, but only to understand. He is thus furnished with an unerring standard of historical verity, by which his information from other sources may be tested. That the information offered by the Jewish and other Oriental authorities is not to be found in the Bible, does not necessarily prove it to be untrue. It was not the object of the Sacred writers to relate every historical event, or every circumstance of the events which they do relate, and still less every incident in the lives of those persons of whom they speak; and that there existed among the Jews not only oral traditions but written documents of ancient date, containing particulars which the sacred narratives do not afford, appears very clearly, not only from the express references which the Scripture writers make to such documents as supplying further information, but from the incidental allusions—as to things well known to the Hebrew nation—to events and circumstances of which the historical narratives of Scripture give no account, and which are often of such ancient date, at the time allusion is thus made to them, as to show that they could only then have existed in the knowledge of the people through oral traditions or written documents. The truth of the accounts which they afford is substantiated, in the particular instances, by the allusions thus made by the sacred writers to them, and which also reflect a high degree of respectability upon the source from which they were derived.(4)

If these documents and traditions had been preserved in their original forms, they would rank on the same level with the first rate materials of general history; but, considering the superior and peculiar authority of the sacred narrative, only as second-rate materials in a history of the Jews. But they have long been lost; although, probably, a considerable number of those details which the sacred historians did not find it necessary to embody in their compendious accounts, are preserved in the history by Josephus, and possibly a large proportion of them may exist, mixed with and disguised by enormous absurdities and matters of no value, in the traditions preserved in writing by the Jews and the Arabians. It may be well to remember, that many accounts which come before us, as oral traditions committed to writing, must be regarded as having been originally derived from written documents, after the loss of which many of them survived as oral statements; and in this state they certainly received many disguising exaggerations, additions, and dislocations, before they were ultimately re-committed to writing in the very repulsive form in which they now come before us. This is not, indeed, the account which the Jews themselves give; for they allege that all their traditions were originally oral, and never existed in writing until they were put into the form in which they now appear. This may willingly be conceded of the mass of them, which are many degrees worse than useless; but to those who are disposed to carefully consider the

subject, it will manifestly appear that they may be expected to contain a portion of the facts transmitted from those older and more authentic sources from which the scriptural writers appear to have drawn their accounts, and to which they distinctly refer those who desire more extensive information. We know, on the authority of Scripture, that some part at least of this more ancient information existed in writing; but as we are not sure that some of the allusions in Scripture may not be to facts contained in those oral traditions, it may be expedient to remind the reader that, from a variety of circumstances, the difference between oral tradition and written statement, as historical authority, is far less important in the east than in Europe, and, even in the east, was far less important anciently than now. On these grounds we should be disposed to consider even oral ancient tradition as not necessarily excluded from historical notice, and, although we should scarcely be inclined to assign it a tithe of that pre-eminent value which the Jews claim for it, we shall sometimes consider it our duty to explore this class of materials, in the hope of finding a few of those further details which may have existed in the old documents or traditions to which the sacred writers occasionally refer. The mass of these statements, as they now stand, are so suspicious, that it will, in most cases, be necessary, in the first instance, to presume that even the most plausible and needful of them are untrue, until, after a careful examination, the facts which they offer appear to be not only not contradictory to the standard narrative, but, while in themselves desirable for the completion or elucidation of the biblical accounts, are in circumstantial agreement with the facts which those accounts record, and are in no wise opposed in spirit to them. Even the statements which, after having been already sifted by Josephus, are admitted by him into his narrative, must be subjected to the same process. And when we are privileged to possess one standard narrative in which implicit confidence may be placed, the common rules of historical criticism leave it far from difficult to estimate the value of the other reports which come before us; and this is easier still, when the agreement or disagreement of these reports with the spirit and manners of the age to which they refer becomes another element of our consideration.

We have a very general suspicion of all the traditionary history which applies to the age of the patriarchs, whether we find it in Josephus, in the Rabbins, or in the Arabian historians. But, subject to this reservation, it may be desirable, for the information of the reader, sometimes to state the particulars which they offer, if only to mark the contrast between their injudicious elaborations and the simple and unaffected truth of the standard narrative.

Most of the traditions which refer to the early life of Abram, turn upon the religion of his family. All we know from Scripture on this subject is, that Terah served other gods beyond the Euphrates, and there is not much reason to doubt but that Abram and the other members of Terah's family were brought up in the same service. That, as some allege, Abram stood alone as the sole worshipper of the true God, among an idolatrous people, and in a family of idolaters, and that *therefore* he became the special object of the Divine choice and favour, does not appear to us a very probable or a very necessary explanation. It is enough, and it is far more probable, that he felt unsatisfied with the things which he had been taught, and with the practices which were followed—that he had an inquiring mind, and sought after the true God, if haply he might find him; and we know that when he had found him, he manifested his satisfaction and joy by the most implicit and memorable obedience to every dictate of "the heavenly vision."

The Jewish traditions undertake to decide the question whether image worship had commenced at this early date, by assuring us that Terah was himself a maker of images. And they proceed to inform us that, when God had enlightened Abram's mind, he took an opportunity of burning and destroying all the idols in his father's house; and, it is added, that Haran attempted to snatch the idols of his father from the fire, but was himself surprised by the flames, and perished with his gods. They thus account for the premature death of Haran, which the Scriptures only notice without explaining.

We are further told that for this act Abram was accused before Nimrod, and was condemned to be burnt; but that his Divine Protector miraculously withdrew him from the flames. These traditions are told with some variations; but are in substance very ancient, and to this day are articles of firm belief among the Jews, Christians, and Moslems of the East. The word *Ur*

means, in the Hebrew, *Fire*, and it is alleged that this last incident in the history of Abram is indicated in that passage of Scripture which tells us that God brought forth Abram from Ur (or the Fire) of the Chaldees.

The excellent historian of the Jews, Josephus, could not but be well acquainted with all the current traditionary legends concerning their renowned forefather: but although belonging to a sect (the Pharisees) which cherished "the traditions of the elders" with unusual zeal, he in general makes but a very guarded use of them; and in *his* history of Abram omits all the particulars which we have now stated. But in this instance, at least, the omission appears to have been rather from prudential considerations than from actual disbelief; for it is not difficult to discover the very traditions which he allowed to influence his view of the religious character of the patriarch. He very properly omits any notice of image worship; but tells us that the people of Abram's native country were worshippers of the heavenly bodies, and possessed much knowledge of astronomy, with which science he intimates that Abram himself was well acquainted. He tells us that the patriarch was of a most sagacious and superior mind, and possessed an eloquence the most persuasive. He had obtained, and endeavoured to give to others, a much purer idea of God than in his time prevailed; and he was the first to teach that the sun, the moon, and the host of heaven had no power of themselves, but were subject to a superior power by which their movements were regulated. The Chaldeans and other inhabitants of Mesopotamia would not hear this doctrine; and, when they raised a tumult against the preacher of it, he deemed it proper to leave the country, and by the command, and through the assistance of God, he went to sojourn in the land of Canaan.*

This account contains nothing, that we can perceive, contrary to Scripture, though it offers information which Scripture does not contain. Nothing in it is more remarkable than the complete omission of all mention of Nimrod, who figures so conspicuously in all the Rabbinical and Oriental accounts of the patriarch, and whose presence would alone suffice to nullify them all: for, according to the just view of Scripture chronology which the historian took, Nimrod could not well have been the contemporary of Abram, but, according to ordinary circumstances, must have been dead long before his birth.

The Arabian traditions of Abram's early life do, in some of their details, conform very strikingly to the view which we have taken of his religious character; and although replete with preposterous incidents, and unentitled to historical notice, are curious and characteristic in themselves, and are also interesting as showing the notions which a large division of the human race entertain concerning the early life of the great patriarch whose memory the Moslem unites with the Christian and the Jew to cherish. On these grounds we have embodied the substance of these traditions in a note at the end of this chapter.(5)

It is seen that all these stories and traditions concur in intimating that Abraham had, in his own country, brought enmity and opposition upon himself, by the open expression of opinions contrary to the corruptions of religion which there prevailed. To the same effect is the old account preserved in the apocryphal book of Judith, where the irritated Holofernes is represented as requiring information concerning the Jewish people from all the neighbouring princes. On this subject the descendants of Lot might be supposed to be better informed than any of the others; and, accordingly, Achior, "the captain of all the children of Ammon," is represented as coming forward to furnish the required intelligence, which he does in a slight sketch of the history of the Hebrew nation, which, brief as it is, contains some facts not recorded in the Scriptures. At the outset, he says, "This people is descended of the Chaldeans; and they sojourned heretofore in Mesopotamia, because they would not follow the gods of their fathers, which were in the land of Chaldea. For they left the way of their ancestors and worshipped the God of heaven, the God whom they know: so they cast them out from the face of their gods, and they fled into Mesopotamia, and sojourned there many days." (Judith v. 2—8.) This statement would be curious and interesting if we could rely upon it as embodying the traditions of the Ammonites on this subject, seeing that Ammon, their ancestor, was the son of Lot, who was Abram's nephew, and the companion of his migration from Mesopotamia. But, from certain turns of expression, which are not in keeping with the character of

* Antiq. l. i. c. 6.

the speaker, it is evident that the speech is put into his mouth by the narrator, and actually exhibits a Jewish tradition, worthy of notice as the oldest on this subject which exists in writing. Its information is not *at variance* with that which the Scriptures give, while it coincides, in substance, with the later statements of Josephus, and with the resulting effect of the less authentic traditions and tales of the Jews and Arabians.

We see, then, that all accounts out of Scripture, and not therein disagreeing with Scripture, state that Abraham was of purer faith than his countrymen, and on that account left or was obliged to leave his native land. This may be true or not; for although Scripture states his proceeding as the result of an immediate command from Heaven—we know not, from the same authority, what previous enlightenments, what line of conduct, what difficulties, what past or present thoughts—prepared the patriarch to receive and to be guided by the Divine command. There were such, doubtless; and even the command has the tone less of an original suggestion than of an authoritative interposition to decide a question which " the father of the faithful " had entertained, but found it difficult to determine.

It is not clear from Scripture that the father and surviving brother of Abram had by this time been brought over to his religious views. Its slight intimations seem to imply that they had not: nor does their going with him, when he departed from Ur of the Chaldees in obedience to the heavenly call,(6) necessarily imply their participation in his religious sentiments, since various other considerations are supposable which might have influenced them, and they might even have recognized the authority of that Divine Being who spoke to Abram to direct his and even their own course, without being convinced, as Abraham was, of his *exclusive* claim to honour and obedience.

So the whole house of Terah departed with Abram, from the land of the Chaldees, and proceeded until they arrived at " Haran," or, more properly, " Charran (7) (as in Acts vii. 2), where, for some cause not declared to us—but probably the increasing infirmities of Terah, together with the temptations of a rich pastoral district for their flocks and herds—they were induced to abide many years. After fifteen years, the father of Abram died in Haran, at the then reasonable old age of 205 years.(8)

Abram was then at the ripe middle age of seventy-five years, when the Divine command, made to him fifteen years before, was renewed, with a slight but significant variation of its terms. The first command required him to leave his country and his kindred, or his natural connections, in the general sense, and was not considered necessarily to involve a separation from his immediate family; but the second call was more precise and stringent, requiring him to leave not only his country and his kindred, but also his " father's house." The Divine intentions being confined to his posterity, which as yet had no existence—for he had no child, his wife being barren—it was judged right to isolate him completely from all such natural and social ties as might interfere with this object. This was hard to bear and God knew that it was; and, therefore, although it was designed that his faith should be tried to the uttermost, and made manifest as an example to his posterity and to the people of future ages and distant lands, these trials did not come upon him in one overwhelming demand, but were made successive, after intervals of repose,—rising one upon another, as his trust grew progressively stronger in that Great Being, the special object of whose care he had become. We shall see this throughout the history of this patriarch.

When the patriarch received his first call, the circumstances in which he was then placed, and the privilege of being still permitted to remain with all those who were, by natural ties, dearest to him, probably made the commanded migration indifferent or even desirable to him, and therefore no promises with reference to the future are held forth to encourage his obedience. But now, when he seems to have been more prosperously and happily situated, saving the recent grief of his father's death, the command to depart is accompanied, for the first time, by that high promise which was destined to cheer and bless his remaining life. This call and the annexed promise are thus given in the scriptural narrative :—" Then the Lord said unto Abram, Depart from thy land, and from thy kindred, *and from thy father's house*, unto *the* land which I will shew thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing ; and I will bless them

that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee; and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. xii. 1—3.)*

The land to which he was to go is not named, either on this or the former occasion; but the difference in the form of expression may have sufficed to intimate to Abram, that the country appointed for his sojourning would now be more distinctly indicated to him.

So Abram separated himself from the household of Nahor, his only surviving brother, and departed, not at that time knowing the point of his ultimate destination, but relying upon the guidance of the Divine Being whose command he was obeying. Lot, the son of his dead brother Haran, and brother to his wife Sarai, joined himself to him. For this no reason is given, but may be found in the fact, that, while Abraham remained without issue, Lot was his natural heir; besides, it appears that Lot entertained an *exclusive* belief in the God of Abram, which there is some ground for suspecting that Nahor and his household did not. Lot had a household and property of his own, and the united parties must have formed a goodly pastoral company, such as may still be often met with crossing the plains and deserts of the east in search of new pastures. We are told that they went forth "with all the substance they had gathered, and the souls they had gotten in Haran," which last clause applies to the "little ones" of their households—being the children which had been born of their slaves during the fifteen years of their stay in Haran.

Those who are, from reading or travelled observation, conversant with the existing manners of the Asiatic pastoral tribes,—as the Arabians and the Tartars,—can easily form in their minds a picture of this great migrating party. Under the conduct of their venerable emir, and the active direction and control of his principal servants, we behold, from the distance, a lengthened dark line stretching across the plain, or winding among the valleys, or creeping down the narrow pathway on the mountain-side. That in this line there are hosts of camels we know afar off, by the grotesque outline which the figures of these animals make, their tall shapes and their length of neck; and that the less distinguishable mass which appears in motion on the surface of the ground is composed of flocks of sheep, and perhaps goats, we can only infer from circumstances.(9) On approaching nearer we find that all this is true, and that, moreover, many of the camels are laden with the tents, and with the few utensils and needments which the dwellers in tents require; and if the natural condition of the traversed country be such as to render the precaution necessary, some of the animals may be seen bearing provisions and skins of water. The baggage-camels follow each other with steady and heavy tread, in files, the halter of those that follow being tied to the harness of those that precede, so that the foremost only needs a rider to direct his course; but nevertheless women, children, and old men are seen mounted on the other burdens which some of them bear. These are slaves, retainers, and other persons not actively engaged in the conduct of the party, and not of sufficient consequence to ride on saddled dromedaries. Such are reserved for the chiefs of the party, their women, children, relatives, and friends, and are not, unless it happen for convenience, strung together like the drudging animals which bear the heavier burdens.

For the youths and men of vigorous age, the slaves and shepherds, there is active employment in directing the orderly progress of the flocks, and in correcting the irregularities, friskings, and breaches which sometimes occur. In this service they are assisted by a stout staff, crooked at one end,—the origin of the pastoral and episcopal crook,—which, however, is but sparingly used by those most accustomed to the flocks, their familiar voices being in general quite sufficient to control and guide the sheep; and of their voices they make no stinted use, but exert them liberally in the incessant utterance of loud cries and shouts, reproaches, warnings, and encouragements. The feeble of the flock are very tenderly dealt with; the progress of the whole is but slow, on account of the lambs, and the ewes great with young; and some of the shepherds may be seen bearing in their arms the weaker lambs of the flock, or those which had been lately yeaned. The men engaged in these services are on foot, though a few of the principal may be on camels, or, preferably, on asses, if there be any of those animals in the troop. The whole conduct of the Oriental shepherds supplies many beautiful allusions and

* The passage is here given as translated by Dr. Hales, more precisely than in our public version. The difference between the first and second calls is pointed out in a note (already referred to) at the end of this chapter.

metaphors to the sacred writers of the Hebrews,—as where the prophet says that the good shepherd "shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." (Isa. xl. 11.)

We have introduced this short description of the pastoral migrations with the view of enabling the reader to form some idea not only of this migration of Abram and Lot, but of the various other removals which are so frequently mentioned in the history of the pastoral patriarchs.

Nicolas of Damascus, an ancient author cited by Josephus, states that Abram, coming from the country of the Chaldeans, *which is above Babylon*,* with a large company, tarried for a season at Damascus, and reigned there, before he went into the land of Canaan. He adds that the name of Abram continued to be very famous in all the region of Damascus, in which there was still a place called Beth-Abram (the house of Abram). Justin, in his extravagant account of the origin of the Jews, also numbers Abram among the kings of Damascus.† There is nothing in Scripture to countenance this story, which is probably based on some tradition that Abram encamped for a while near Damascus, in his way to Canaan: even this we do not know; but it seems not unlikely, as that city lay on the most convenient route from Haran to the land of Canaan, and as the subsequently favoured domestic of the patriarch, whom he on one occasion describes as having been "born in his house," is, in another, called by him Eliezer *of Damascus*.

The history in Genesis gives us no account of this journey, which is the same afterwards made by Jacob, and the longest ever made by the Hebrew patriarchs. We are only told, with inimitable brevity, that "they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came." It would, to us, have been interesting to follow the route which was on this occasion taken. But, in our existing want of information, it is only necessary to observe that some writers tell us needlessly of the frightful deserts which Abram crossed ‡ in this journey. But we need not necessarily conclude that the present great desert of Syria was a desert then. And, if it were, seeing that flocks of sheep cannot, like a herd of camels, be conducted across a parched desert, destitute of herbage and of water, as the deserts of Syria and Arabia are, during summer, it will follow that the transit was made, if at all, in the early spring, when, from the recent winter and vernal rains, the Syrian desert, at least in its northern part, becomes a rich prairie, covered with fragrant and nutritive herbage.([10]) But no situation which has been assigned to Haran requires that the patriarch should at all cross this desert in journeying from thence to the land of Canaan. Proceeding westward from beyond the Euphrates, he would skirt this desert on the north, and then turning southward he would follow the course of the mountains which border it on the west, being with, little interruption, most of the way in the enjoyment of the fine pastures and abundant waters of the plains and valleys which border, or are involved among, the Syrian mountains.

Arriving at last in the land of Canaan, the patriarch was arrested by the rich pastures of Samaria, near the mountains of Ebal and Gerizim; and in the beautiful valley of Moreh, which lies between these mountains, and where the city of Shechem was not long after founded, Abram formed his first encampment in the land.

Not long after his arrival, the Lord favoured the patriarch with a more distinct intimation of his intentions than any which he had hitherto received, by the promise that he would bestow on his posterity the land into which he had come. From this time forward Abram and the other patriarchs were constantly taught to regard the land of Canaan as the future heritage of their children.

Abram testified his gratitude and adoration by building there an altar unto JEHOVAH, who had appeared unto him. We are by this instructed that Abram even then knew God by this his high and peculiar name—that mystic name on which many have so largely written, and

* A valuable geographical intimation this, by the way, showing how the name "Chaldee," and "land of the Chaldeans," was anciently applied.

† Nicol. Damascen. in Joseph. l. i. c. 8; and in Euseb. Præpar. l. ix. c. 16; Justin, l. xxxvi. c. 4.

‡ Voltaire, and other sceptical writers of his school, found on this circumstance several shallow objections to the Scriptural account of this migration, which evince nothing but their ignorance of even the existing usages of the Oriental nomades. They have been ably answered by the Abbé Guénée, in his 'Lettres de quelques Juifs Portugais, Allemands et Polonais, à M. de Voltaire.'

on which not a few deep, or ingenious, or simply absurd, speculations have been founded by Christians and by Jews.(11)

As this is the first act of religious service which is mentioned in the patriarchal history, and, indeed, the first recorded since the act of worship and sacrifice performed by Noah when he came forth from the ark, it deserves to be attentively considered. It is observable that we meet with no mention of temples or ecclesiastical structures in this age. The Sabæan idolaters, from among whom it appears that Abram came, did not until a very long subsequent age, worship their gods in temples made with hands, but presented their offerings and sacrifices upon altars erected in the open air. Our information concerning the religious practices of the Canaanites is little more than negative; but there is nothing in the Scriptures, or in the civil or religious state of society in this early age, which renders it probable that they, or even the inhabitants of Egypt, had buildings set apart for religious service. Egypt probably had the first temples: and from history we should infer that the earliest in at least Lower Egypt—which alone is the Egypt of the early Scriptures—was that at Heliopolis; and, through the measure of progress which has been made in deciphering the sculptured hieroglyphics of the old Egyptian monuments, we now know that this temple was originally founded by the first Osirtasen, upwards of three centuries later than the time now under our notice. This monarch also built a temple in the province of Crocodilopolis: but before his time, this new branch of learning has not ascertained that any temples existed in Egypt.* It may seem, therefore, that the practice of the patriarchs to render their religious rites at an open altar was the general practice of their time. It appears that they created an altar of heaped stones, or earth, at every place where they purposed to remain encamped any considerable time, as well as at other places where God vouchsafed to manifest his presence to them. And many were the memorials of this kind—altars dedicated to Jehovah—which the Hebrew fathers erected, at different places, while they were "strangers and sojourners" in the Promised Land. We think it may be collected that at such altars sacrifices were not regularly or periodically offered, but only on extraordinary occasions; but the facts which the Scriptures furnish concerning the religious observances of the patriarchs are few, and these few it may be best to notice as they occur.

It may further be observed, that in all the patriarchal history there is not, in any nation, the mention of a priest—unless it be in the singular instance of Melchizedek, which will presently engage our notice. Besides this, the first distinct mention of priests, as a body of men set apart for the service of religion, occurs, like that of temples, in Egypt, a good while after the times which now engage our attention. Priests, however, no doubt existed before temples; and under some complications of religious service, with which we are unacquainted, they may have existed in the time of Abram. In the patriarchal practice, however, which appears to have been that in general use, the functions, which were in after-times considered priestly, appear to have been discharged by the eldest, or first-born of the family, and that this indeed was considered one of the most valuable privileges of his seniority. Our Talmudical information on this subject is in entire conformity with Scripture. It tells us that before the tabernacle was erected, private altars and high places were in use for sacrifice. When the children of a family were to offer a sacrifice, then the father was the priest: but when the sons of a family were met together to offer sacrifice after they came to be themselves fathers of houses, having families of their own, and were separated from their father and their father's house—their father not being present with them—then the eldest son was the priest or sacrificer for himself and his brethren.†

A pastoral chief has no other alternatives than either to remove frequently to the new pastures which his flocks and herds require, or, retaining his household long in one place, to send forth his flocks, under the charge of trusty persons, to distant pastures. The former was the course which Abram took. His next recorded removal was about twenty-four miles from the

* See Wilkinson's 'Ancient Egyptians,' vol. i., chap. 2. This valuable writer, in his historical chapters, furnishes some very important Egyptian dates and facts, which will be useful to us; but, as in his references to supposed contemporary incidents in Jewish history, he makes use of the common Usherian chronology, which we do not, we shall be obliged to make our own applications and conclusions. In the present instance he necessarily allows no more than an interval of 180 years between Abraham's visit to Egypt and the reign of Osirtasen I.

† Tract. Melikim in Mishna, 14; Bereshith Rabba, fol. 7, cited in Shuckford, book v. p. 255.

plain of Moreh, southward, towards the vale of Siddim, where the valleys of the hilly country north of the plain of Jericho offer fine and luxuriant pasturage. In this district the patriarch pitched his tent near a mountain on the east of the place then called Luz, but to which, in a later day, Jacob gave the name of Bethel.* There also the patriarch "built an altar to JEHOVAH, and called upon the name of JEHOVAH."

When the exhaustion of the pasturages rendered further removals necessary, we learn that his progress was southward.

In those days there arose a famine in the land of Canaan, doubtless caused—as scarcity usually is caused in that country—by one or more seasons of excessive drought. It is the peculiar felicity of Egypt that its soil does not need local rains to awaken its productive powers, which are called into most vigorous operation by the periodical overflowings of the river Nile. There may be scarcity even in Egypt, for the river sometimes fails of its due redundance; but this happens but rarely, and when it does occur, the causes which produce it are to be found in the droughts of that remote country in which the river rises, or which it traverses in the early part of its course. But as these remote droughts which stint the water of the Nile and produce scarcities in Egypt—which has itself no adequate rains in its lower country, and none in its upper, to compensate for this want—are seldom so extensive as to have any serious influence in the countries which border on that land in which the river *terminates* its course, it follows that there is seldom any coincidence between the scarcities of Western Asia and those which occur, with comparative rarity, in Egypt. Thus that singular country has, in all ages, been regarded as the granary of Western Asia, not only from the extraordinary fertility produced by the periodical inundation of its soil, but from the circumstance that it might be expected to furnish a supply of corn at the very time when other countries were consumed with famine—producing droughts.

It is interesting to learn that this was the state of matters in the time of the patriarchs, who on all occasions looked towards Egypt, whenever a scarcity of corn was experienced in the land of Canaan.

So now, Abram, being in the south of the Promised Land, heard that there was corn in Egypt, and determined to proceed thither with his household. Josephus adds that he also wished to ascertain the religious sentiments of the Egyptians, and to teach them or to be taught by them; which is consistent enough with the traditionary history of Abram's earlier life, but has no warrant in Scripture.

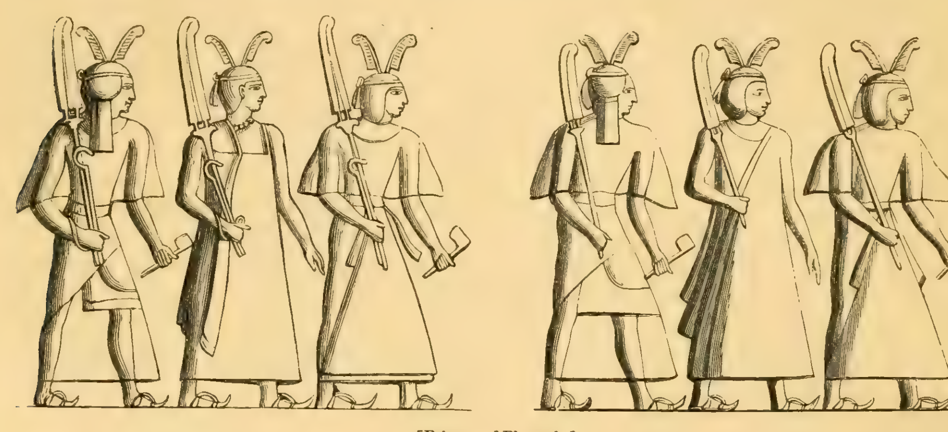
Arriving on the borders of Egypt, the patriarch had an opportunity of making comparisons between the Egyptian women and his own wife, greatly to the advantage of the latter. She appears to have been a very fine woman; and, under the present circumstances, her comparatively fresh complexion, as a native of Mesopotamia, gained by the contrast with the dusky hue of the Egyptian females. It is true that Sarai was at this time sixty-five years of age; but this age is not to be estimated by the present standard of life, but according to the standard which then existed, by which the wife of Abram could not seem to her contemporaries of more advanced age than a woman of thirty or thirty-five appears to us.

Knowing the attraction of his wife's beauty, and being perhaps aware of some recent circumstances in Egypt which were calculated to awaken his apprehensions for the result, the heart of Abram failed him, in the very point in which the hearts of all men are more weak and tender than in any other, and he resolved to take shelter under an equivocation. He therefore said to his wife,—"Behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon. Therefore it may come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they will say, 'This is his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive.' Say, I pray thee, that thou art my sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake, and that my soul may live because of thee." (Gen. xii. 11, 13.) This was accordingly done; and we are instructed by this, and other similar incidents, that the men who figure in the history before us as the best and holiest in aggregate character, were not such immaculate representatives of ideal perfection as shine in common history and romance, but are true human beings, "compassed about with

* This neighbourhood has not much been visited by modern travellers. Rauwolff (ed. Ray, p. 317) was there, and says that some old ruins of stone are pointed out as marking the spot where Abram pitched his tent. Bethel, which still bore the name of Bethizella, was situated about half a league to the west of this, at the foot of the hill, in a very fertile district. We shall presently have further occasion to notice Bethel.

infirmities," as all men are, and tempted, as all men are, by their passions, doubts, or fears; and by such temptation too often drawn aside from the right path. The whole of the sacred book offers to us not a single character exempt from temptation; and it tells us of only One whom all temptation left " without sin."

It appears that Abram did not over-estimate the effect which the beauty of Sarai was likely to produce upon the sensitive Egyptians. The attractions of the fair Mesopotamian stranger were speedily discovered, and became the theme of many tongues. She was at last seen by some of " the princes of Pharaoh;" and the report of her beauty becoming, through them, the talk of the court, soon reached the ears of the Egyptian king.



[Princes of Pharaoh.]

In Europe the tendency of civilization is to procure increased respect from the governing powers for the personal liberties and privileges of the people, and for the rights of property and the sanctities of private life; but this rule has ever been reversed in the East, where the most civilized nations have always been those in which the natural immunities of man have been the least regarded, and in which no natural or social privilege existed on which the sovereign despotism might not, if it so pleased, lay its iron hand freely. Here we have a very early instance of this. Egypt had doubtless at this time reached a higher point of civilization than any other country of which the sacred history takes notice—and here we read of the first act of despotism which that history records. Abram was, in the first place, afraid that he should be slain for the sake of his wife, for which reason he reported her as his sister; but no sooner did the reputation of the beauty of this alleged sister of a powerful emir—a stranger taking refuge in the country—arrive at the ears of its sovereign, than he sent to demand her for his harem. This is what the sovereigns of the most " civilized " Oriental states often do, as a matter of royal right, when stimulated by the sight or rumour of a beautiful female among the sisters or daughters of their subjects; and the present case is a remarkable evidence of the early existence of this most offensive privilege of Oriental despotism. It is evident that the patriarch had no appeal from the authority which made this grievous demand; and yet could not himself have been a willingly consenting party. That Abram was not the subject of the Egyptian king, but a newly-arrived stranger of distinction, rendered this a still stronger act of despotic power than it might otherwise have seemed; and it was probably from this consideration that Pharaoh sought to pacify or propitiate the patriarch by making him valuable presents, suitable to his condition as a pastoral chief—such as " sheep, and oxen, and he-asses, and men-servants, and maid-



[Egyptian Man-Servant.]



[Egyptian Maid-Servants.]

servants, and she asses and camels." Some reflection has been made upon the conduct of Abram in accepting these presents; but those who are acquainted with the usages of the East know that he dared not refuse them.

So Sarai was taken to the house of Pharaoh.(12) This lamentable result of his weak equivocation did not so far rouse the patriarch's faith or courage as to make him avow the actual relationship between her and himself. But at this juncture it pleased God to interfere to prevent the evil consequences, which human means could not well have averted, by inflicting on Pharaoh and his house "great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife." What these plagues were we are not clearly told; but probably some grievous disease, of such a nature as, joined to some intimation to that effect,* rendered it manifest to him that the infliction was intended to prevent or punish his designs upon the wife of another man. On this, the king sent for Abram, and after rebuking him with some severity for the dissimulation of his conduct, which had placed all parties in a dangerous position, desired him to take his wife and leave the country, at the same time giving orders to his people to facilitate his departure.

Seeing that the early condition of Egypt is a subject of great historical interest in itself, as well as from the early connection of the Hebrews with that country, the visit of Abram to it awakens our curiosity, and makes us studious to collect all the information which the account of that visit furnishes or indicates. The facts are few compared with those which transpire at a subsequent date; but these few are valuable.

We observe, in the first place, that this visit of Abram settles the question whether this, the lower part of Egypt, was then dry.† It was dry, and inhabited by an industrious agricultural population, who extracted from the soil so much more food than sufficed for their own subsistence, that, as previously noted, the country had already become the asylum of those who were oppressed by famine in other countries.

The impression which the account of the transactions in which Abram was engaged in Egypt affords, is very different from that which we receive from the account of his dealings with the petty sovereigns and states of Canaan. With them, Abram and the other patriarchs treat very much as with equals—as in the instances of the kings of Siddim, the king of Gerar, and "the children of Heth," not to mention the comparatively late instance of the affair between Jacob's family and the prince and people of Shechem. In all these cases the patriarchs are treated with deference and respect; and give free utterance to their sentiments, even those likely to be most unpalatable. But before Pharaoh, Abram, when reproved by him, answers not a word; and

* Josephus says that the intimation came from the priests or diviners whom the king consulted; and that the infliction consisted of a sedition as well as of a bodily disease. But most commentators, having regard to the similar affair with Abimelech, suppose that Pharaoh received this intimation in a dream or vision.

† Scripture furnishes another and most conclusive fact on this question, by informing us that Zoan, or Tanis, in Lower Egypt, was a city so proverbially ancient, that Moses indicates the antiquity of Hebron by telling us that it was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt. (Num. xiii. 22.) Now Hebron existed when Abram arrived in Canaan, and we do not know that its date was then recent.

if the royal gifts which he received from the king of Egypt testified the consideration to which the foreign emir was entitled, it was the consideration of a superior to one whom he wished to benefit. We direct attention the rather to this circumstance, as Abram had a feeling in the matter of presents which led him, on every other occasion with which we are acquainted, to decline those which were offered to him; for which, on one of those occasions, he assigns to the king of Sodom the dignified reason,—"I will not take anything that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, 'I have made Abram rich.'"

In short, the idea which we derive from the account of this remarkable affair, is that Lower Egypt was even then a great and flourishing kingdom, ruled by a powerful and magnificent monarch, invested with many of the characteristics by which an Oriental despotism has in all ages been distinguished, and surrounded by courtiers, who made it their prime object to minister to his tastes and passions. It will also be noted that this monarch was thus early distinguished by the title of Phrah, or, as we spell it, Pharaoh, which in all subsequent ages was borne by the native sovereigns of Egypt, and which is the Egyptian name for the sun, applied by way of eminence to him whom his subjects regarded as the chief of men.* It may, moreover, not be unimportant to observe that slavery existed at this time in Egypt, as it did also in other countries. This is shown by Pharaoh's gift—men-slaves and women-slaves—to Abram; and if, as might be suggested, a foreign dynasty ruled then in Egypt, it is not impossible that at least some of these slaves may have been native Egyptians. Hagar "the bondwoman," of whom we shall presently read, was probably one of these women-slaves; and she is called an "Egyptian."

It would be a valuable piece of information to know what king or dynasty reigned in Egypt at the time of Abram's visit. But the sacred narrative does not mention any king of Egypt by his proper name till after the time of Solomon; and the Egyptian chronology at, and for some time after, this early date is still involved in much uncertainty and confusion, notwithstanding the light which has been thrown on the general subject by the progress made in deciphering the hieroglyphic inscriptions. But all the information from this source which has lately transpired, or with which further inquiry has made us acquainted, tends greatly to confirm the view of the matter which we have had occasion to state in another place.†

One of the best established facts in the very early history of Egypt is, that its lower country was for a long series of years (260) under the dominion of a race of pastoral nomades, while the upper country continued subject to the native sovereigns. This great fact has abundance of incidental confirmation, although many particulars which it might be most desirable to know remain in obscurity, and among these is the date at which the pastoral dominion in Egypt commenced or terminated. In the work to which we have referred, we have shown the strong probability that it had been put an end to before the time of Joseph; and in confirmation of this we may now adduce the testimony of Mr. Wilkinson, who, from the state of the earliest monuments, and from the information which they afford, conceives that the irruption of the pastors was anterior to the erection of any building now extant in Egypt, and long before the accession of the 17th dynasty,‡ that is, in the earlier periods of Egyptian history, previous to the era of Osirtasen I. The monuments of that monarch satisfactorily prove that in his reign and that of his second successor, the Egyptians had already extended their conquests over some of the tribes of Asia, and were consequently free from any enemies within their own valley.§ This writer also suggests, as a question, whether the dominion of the shepherd-kings, as they are called, in Egypt, may not have been overthrown by this Osirtasen. Now this king was, as Mr. Wilkinson conceives, coeval with Joseph, and must, at least, have been nearly so; and

* "I have frequently had occasion to notice the true meaning and purport of this name. I shall therefore only observe, that it is written in Hebrew, Phrah, פרעה, and is taken from the Egyptian word Pire, or Phre (pronounced Phra), signifying the sun, and represented in hieroglyphics by the hawk and globe, or sun, over the royal banners. It was through the well-known system of analogies that the king obtained this title, being the chief of earthly, as the sun was of heavenly, bodies. But the word is not derived from, or related to, *Ouro*, 'king,' as Josephus supposes ('Antiq.' viii. c. 6). Phouro is like Pharaoh; but the name is Phrah in Hebrew, and Pharaoh is an unwarranted corruption."—Wilkinson's 'Ancient Egyptians,' vol. i. p. 43.

† 'Pictorial Bible,' notes to Gen. xxv. 34, and Exod. i. 8.

‡ The 17th dynasty commenced B.C. 1651, and was introduced by Osirtasen II. The *first* Osirtasen belonged to the 16th dynasty, and Wilkinson thinks he began to reign about B.C. 1740, and reigned forty-three years.

§ Wilkinson, vol. i. ch. 1.

it is not a little remarkable that in concluding, from the evidence of monuments, that the pastor-kings were expelled before the accession of Osirtasen I., he obtains exactly the same conclusion as that to which Hales and Faber arrived, when, on purely historical data, they conceived that this great change took place before, but not long before, Joseph was made governor of Egypt; Hales fixing it about the year 1885, B.C. This coincidence of independent testimony, taking different lines of evidence, is very important; and its use for our present purpose is, that if the pastoral dynasty was extinguished before the time of Joseph's exaltation, it must have existed at the time of Abram's visit to Egypt, 185 years before, seeing that the conquering nomades occupied the country 260 years. No one supposes that their dominion had terminated *before* the visit of Abram; and that it had not, is indirectly evinced by the sacred narrative itself. In the time of Joseph's government every nomade shepherd was detested at the Egyptian court, in consequence of the oppressive and humiliating dominion which a race of pastors had exercised in the country. Of this we hear nothing in the time of Abram; although, if this race had then recently been expelled, the manifestations of that hatred must have been more manifest and lively in his time than nearly two centuries later. The result of all these considerations tends to intimate that one of the shepherd kings reigned in Lower Egypt at the time of Abram's journey to that country; and this conclusion, while it serves to explain some differing circumstances which we find in the Egyptian court as described in the respective times of Abram and Joseph, throws considerable light upon the picture which, from these accounts, the mind forms of both; and more especially illustrates the fact that, while the family of Jacob found favour at the court of Egypt, and was admitted into the country only for the sake of Joseph, Abram found no difficulty of access to the country, and was treated with consideration by the court in that very character—as a pastoral chief—which was regarded with abomination by the native government of a later day.

The fragments of Manetho intimate that the conquering nomades, while in occupation of Egypt, gradually adapted themselves to the customs and practices of the native Egyptians, while they were careful to maintain their alliance with their kindred tribes of the desert. And as this process of adaptation must have been in operation not less than seventy-five years, at the time now under our notice, we need not wonder that the reigning king bore the Egyptian sovereign title of Pharaoh, and that the external aspect of the court was probably not very different to what it might have been under a native prince; always excepting the sympathy between it and the desert nomades, as contrasted with the hatred of the ensuing native dynasties towards the same race of people.

The degree of attention which has here been given to this interesting subject, while not unsuitably subjoined to the notice of Abram's sojourn in Egypt, forms a necessary introduction to the whole history of the Hebrew intercourse with that country.

By the time that the patriarch returned from Egypt to the land of Canaan, the scarcity which had driven him thence appears to have ceased. He retraced his steps through the southern part of the country, and at last arrived at the place between Bethel and Hai, where his tents had been before, and at the altar which he had formerly built upon one of the neighbouring hills he again enjoyed the satisfaction of "calling upon the name of JEHOVAH."

Since Abram and Lot were formerly encamped in the same place, their substance had been greatly increased. We are now told that "Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold." The royal gifts of the king of Egypt had, no doubt, contributed considerably to the increase of his previous stock of cattle; and as the precious metals are mentioned among the articles of his wealth immediately on his return from Egypt, they were most likely obtained in the same country, either by the gift of the king or from the sale of the produce of his flocks to the towns-people. This is, indeed, the first occasion on which the precious metals are mentioned, in all history, as articles of property and wealth—that is, as shown by subsequent transactions—as the representatives of value. Lot, who had hitherto been the constant companion of Abram's migrations, was also rich, having great possessions of "flocks, and herds, and tents." That he also is not said to possess silver and gold is a rather remarkable omission, and may be significant.

Their united pastoral wealth was so great that it became manifest that the two parties could not remain together much longer. There is not, indeed, any scarcity of water in the district in which they were then encamped; but the land unappropriated by the Canaanites in that part of the country was insufficient to furnish free pasture to all their flocks and herds; and hence quarrels about the choice and rights of pasture arose between the shepherds of Abram and Lot, who were probably more zealous about the separate interests and rights of their masters than they were themselves. Lot, however, does not in his general character appear to have been at all indifferent to his own interests; and the generous and disinterested proposal which Abram made to prevent all future difference or difficulty, looks very much like an answer from him to some remonstrance or complaint which his nephew had been making. He said, "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen; for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou wilt depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left." In the life of a Bedouin pastor, the concession of a choice of pasturage to another chief is the most extraordinary act of generosity which he can possibly show, in consequence of the large interests which are involved; and, under all the circumstances, it becomes almost sublime when the claims of the party to whom the concession is made to the right of election are only equal or, as in the present case, inferior to those of the conceder. An English grazier may have some idea of this, but it is only by a Bedouin that it can be fully appreciated.

Lot made no scruple of availing himself of the advantage which his uncle's liberal proposal gave to him. From the heights on which they stood, the vale of Siddim offered a most inviting prospect. It was well watered everywhere—which alone is a great advantage to the possessor of flocks and herds—which, with the exuberant vegetation which resulted from it, with the prospect of fair cities here and there, gave it the aspect of a terrestrial paradise. The low, broad, and warm valley, fertilized by the fine river which passed through it, also suggested a resemblance to the rich valley of the Nile, from which they had lately come. Lot, beholding all this, made choice of all the plain of the Jordan for his pasture-ground, and soon after removed to it with all his possessions. We are told that "he pitched his tent towards Sodom"—or, made the neighbourhood of that city his head-quarters, not probably caring so much as Abram might have done about the depraved character of the inhabitants; for he could not well have been ignorant of the fact that the men of Sodom were notoriously "wicked, and sinners before the Lord exceedingly."

Now at last, by the operation of circumstances, without any immediate command from God, Abram was brought to that state of complete isolation from all his natural connexions which the Divine purpose, to preserve his future race apart and unmixed, rendered necessary. But although this present separation, which left the patriarch, more completely than before, alone in a strange land, was not immediately caused by the Divine interposition, no sooner had Lot taken his departure than the Lord again manifested his presence to Abram, to cheer and encourage him by the renewal, in more distinct terms, of the promises formerly made to him. To the childless man was promised a posterity countless as the dust—the future inheritors of the land in which he dwelt—which land he was now directed to traverse, in its length and breadth, to survey the goodly heritage of his children, and to take, as it were, possession of it in their behalf.

In obedience to this direction, Abram broke up his camp near Bethel and departed, proceeding first towards the south. His next encampment was formed about a mile from the town of Arba (afterwards called Hebron), in the fair and fertile valley of Mamre, where he pitched his tent under a terebinth tree, which became in after ages famous for his sake.

The patriarch was still at this place when his history brings us acquainted with the first warlike transaction of which any record remains.

It appears that, in this age, the Assyrian power predominated in Western Asia; and we should not wonder if it be ultimately discovered that even the "Shepherd-kings" of Egypt were Assyrian viceroys, which discovery would throw great light on several circumstances in the lives of the patriarchs. Be this as it may, we learn that some years before the date at

which we are now arrived, an Assyrian force had crossed the Euphrates, and made extensive conquests in Syria. This force appears to have been composed of detachments from the several small nations or tribes which composed or were subject to the Assyrian empire, each commanded by its own *melech* or petty king. Of these kings, one named "Chedorlaomer, king of Elam," probably Elymais, appears to have been left viceroy of the conquests west of the Euphrates. This chief, in the end, resolved to carry his arms southward, and to this end took with him, not only the warriors drawn from his own clan, but those commanded by three other of such "kings," namely, Amraphael, king of Shinar (or Babylonia); Arioch, king of Ellasar; and another called Tidal, who, from his title, "king of Goïm," or, if we translate the word, "of peoples," may seem to have ruled a mixed people or union of small tribes. Although the history only requires the mention of the vale of Siddim, we think it wrong to infer from thence that no other district of southern Syria was involved in the consequences of this expedition. The intermediate country, particularly on the coast of the Jordan and the country beyond, possessed the Horim of Mount Seir, probably experienced its effects, although we only read that the four commanders made war with the five petty kings of the plain, being Bera, king of Sodom; Birsha, king of Gomorrah; Shinab, king of Admah; Shember, king of Zeboïm; and the unnamed king of Bela, afterwards called Zoar. Being defeated, these five kings were made tributary to Chedorlaomer, whom we have supposed to have been viceroy of the Assyrian conquests, west of the Euphrates; and in this state of subjection they remained twelve years. But, in the thirteenth year, some unrecorded circumstances encouraged the kings of the plain to withhold their tribute, in which act we may reasonably conclude that other districts of southern Syria concurred. The year following, Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him undertook a new expedition to punish the revolters; and that they did not proceed at once against the kings of the plain, but went to the countries beyond the vale of Siddim, and only noticed it on their return northward, seems to us to give a very clear sanction to our conclusion—that other neighbouring districts were also subjugated by the Assyrians thirteen years before, and participated in the revolt of the thirteenth year. And this conclusion is further strengthened by the fact that the mere incidents of this expedition would seem to have been far more important than what we must otherwise suppose to have been its sole or principal object. Coming from the north, the Assyrian commanders traversed the country east of the Jordan, overthrowing in their way the gigantic races by which that country appears to have been inhabited. The river Jordan at this time flowed on in a widened stream, beyond the vale of Siddim to the eastern arm of the Red Sea; and continuing their progress southward, along the eastern borders of that river, the invaders smote the Horim who dwelt in the caverns and fortresses of Mount Seir. Where they crossed the Jordan we know not, but we next find them returning northward along its western border, reducing the tribes who inhabited the verge of the wilderness of Paran, on the south of Palestine, namely, the Amalekites, and such of the Amorites as abode on the south-western borders of the vale of Siddim. Arriving at last at that vale, the five kings by whom it was ruled went forth to give them battle. But they were defeated and fled. Now the vale of Siddim was of a bituminous nature, and its surface was in consequence much broken up into deep pits and fissures, into which a large number of the natives who had been in the battle were, in their flight, driven by the victors. Those who escaped, knowing that the towns offered no safety, fled to the neighbouring mountains. The conquerors then proceeded to ravage the cities of the plain. In this they met with no opposition, as all the adult population fit to bear arms had been defeated in the battle. They took all the moveable property and provisions and departed, carrying away with them as captives the women, children, and other people whom they found in the towns. That they did not burn the towns and destroy the people, indicates that the usages of war were less barbarous in this age than they afterwards became—perhaps, because war was as yet a new thing, and human life continued to be regarded as a thing too precious —even to those who held it in their power—to be needlessly sacrificed.

Among the prisoners was Lot, who, it appears, had relinquished the custom of dwelling in tents, and the peculiar character of a nomade shepherd, and had taken the first step into the

usages of settled life, by dwelling in a fixed abode, in a town, sending forth his shepherds to the pastures with his flocks and herds. The evil city of Sodom was that in which he had his residence; and for this choice of an abode he suffered on more than one occasion. As a stranger, he had probably not been expected by the king of Sodom, or had declined, to go forth to the battle; and his servants, who alone could have rendered his aid of much consequence, were probably abroad with his cattle.* Be this as it may, Lot, with his family and goods, were among the spoil with which the conquerors departed, northward, from the vale of Siddim on their homeward march.

The news of this calamity, which had befallen his nephew, was borne to "Abram the Hebrew" ([13]) by one of those who had escaped. The patriarch was then still encamped in the valley of Mamre; and he acted on this occasion with all the decision and promptitude which attend all the operations of a nomade chief. He instantly called out all of his people who were able to bear arms,† and in whom he could most confide,—these were the servants who were "born in his house" or camp, than which they knew no other home, and were attached to their master as to a father. The number of these was 318; and when we make a proportionable addition of slaves bought by himself ‡ in the course of his life, and those presented to him by the king of Egypt—on whose naturally weaker attachment to him the patriarch did not on this occasion make any claim—we obtain a much clearer idea of his wealth and the extent of his establishment than without this incidental statement we should have been able to realize.

Three Amoritish chiefs, brothers, by name Mamre (from whom the valley took its name), Eshcol, and Aner, who were friends and allies of Abram, joined him with their clans; and we need not suppose that they did this *entirely* out of regard to the patriarch, as is usually stated, seeing that they also had an interest in the matter, for the tribe to which they belonged had, as we have seen, been smitten by the Assyrians.

The four nomade chiefs, having united their forces, hastened in pursuit of the four conquering kings, and overtook them about the place which was in after-times called Dan, near the sources of the Jordan. The assault was exactly in such style as still prevails among the Bedouin tribes, which avoid, whenever possible, a clear open fight with a superior or even an equal force, but rather seek their object by sudden surprises and unexpected attacks; opportunities for which are easily found by the neglect, even to infatuation, of employing sentinels and scouts. So Abram, overtaking by night the force which he pursued—or rather, probably, delaying till the night season his advance upon them—divided his people so that they might rush in at once upon them from different quarters, and by overturning the tents and creating all possible confusion, suggest to the enemy, thus roused from their rest, exaggerated ideas of such numerous assailants as it must be hopeless to resist. The slaughter, as such affairs are managed by nomades, is not generally great, and was probably the less on the present occasion, from the fear which the pursuers must have been in, of injuring, in the darkness of the night, those whom they came to deliver. Struck with a panic, the Assyrians fled, leaving behind them all their spoil; and, lest they should have leisure to reflect and rally, Abram chased them about eighty miles, as far as a place called Hobah, to the north of Damascus.

Many writers have pointed out this transaction as one of the most improbable in the Hebrew history; but it is one which a person acquainted with the usages or even the history of the East receives without the least hesitation. The ease with which a very large body of men may be thrown into a panic by the night attack of a very small one is familiar in *all* military history. But the present case needs not such illustration. It rather appears that we form too exalted a notion of the force of the invaders, arising, perhaps, from the ideas of power and magnificence which we connect with the title of "king." But what the kings of

* Josephus says he did assist the king of Sodom: but this is not countenanced by the Scriptural narrative, which appears to indicate that only those who remained in the towns were carried away by the invaders.

† Whenever this expression, "able to bear arms," is used in the early chapters of the history, it must always be understood to mean all the adult males not disqualified by sickness, accident, or age. Among nomade tribes, to this day, every male is versed in the use of arms from childhood, and takes his part in the military operations of his tribe. This also continues to be the case, even in the first stages of settled life.

‡ That Abram had purchased slaves appears in Gen. xvi. 12.

this age usually were, and what the general extent of their power, we have already seen; and even in our own day, too much stress would not, in another case, be laid upon a title which is given equally to the lord of a few hamlets in Africa and to the sovereigns of England or France. Whether the four kings were themselves subject to some greater power for which they acted, as we conceive, or were independent, as some suppose, and only confederated for the purposes of this expedition, the conclusion as to their own condition of petty sovereigns, commanders of their own clans or districts, remains the same, and gives us no reason to suppose that the forces which they conducted were very numerous, or more than relatively formidable. Their strength arose from their association; and then was not such as the five petty kings of the plain were afraid to confront, or the four nomade chiefs to pursue. There is nothing to suggest the idea of a considerable army, either in the circumstances of the time—or even of the present time in the same country—or in the exploits which were performed, which are such as have been performed by small troops during the feudal ages, in Europe, or by a still smaller force of Bedouins or Toorkmans in our own day, dashing like a storm over a large tract of country thinly inhabited by people dispersed in small and distant communities, with no defence but in themselves, and allowed no time to combine in resistance. If the forces of the three Amoritish brothers bore any proportion to that of Abram, the whole pursuing party may have consisted of 1000 men; and if we go so far as to suppose the invading kings had 1000 each, making 5000, the defeat of such a body by 1000 Bedouins in open fight is very far from being without example. And Abram's victory over Chedorlaomer was won, not in open fight, but by a sudden surprise in the night season.

This distinguished action of the patriarch was most acceptable to the native states: for even those which do not appear to have been immediately affected by the expeditions of the Assyrians, could not but regard their progress and success with apprehension; and the great respect with which Abram is ever after this treated by the natives, may, perhaps, in a considerable degree be regarded as the effect of his conduct on this occasion.

The king of Sodom—who had, with his escaped people, come down from his mountain retreat, when the Assyrians withdrew from the plain they had desolated—now hastened to meet and salute the returning conqueror. They met in the valley of Shaveh, otherwise called the King's Dale, which is supposed by most writers to be the same as the place afterwards known as the valley of Jehoshaphat, on the eastern side of Jerusalem. The king of Sodom, deprived of all his substance, had no refreshment to offer the delivering force, which may well have been exhausted by the pursuit and return through a country which the enemy had already desolated. But what was on this occasion necessarily wanting on the part of king Bera, was abundantly supplied by the spontaneous and hearty liberality of a neighbouring prince, whose name, Melchizedek (the just king), is honourably indicative of the estimation in which his character was held, in an age when the names which men bore were made significant of the qualities for which they were most distinguished. He was king of a place called Salem, which has been generally conceived to be the original of the subsequently renowned city of Jeru*salem;* although some authors have preferred the authority of Jerome, who says that Salem was a town near the famous ford over the Jordan at Bethshan or Scythopolis, which still, even to this time, preserved this name, and the inhabitants of which, fondly cherishing the tradition which placed Melchizedek among its kings, went so far as to point out the ruins of a large building as the remains of his palace.

This Melchizedek, king of Salem, on the approach of Abram and his men, went forth to meet them with an ample supply of victuals.* He was, like Abram, a worshipper of the Most High; and as, in that age, the chief, whether king or pastoral sheikh, discharged all such priestly offices as were then in use: he was also, like Abram, the priest of the Most High to his own people, and, as such, he, with great propriety, invoked the blessing of God upon the chief to the wants of whose weary people he so liberally ministered. The patriarch, much of whose conduct on this occasion was manifestly influenced by a generous care of his

* "Bread and wine" in the sacred narrative; but it is well known that, in the Hebrew idiom, bread and wine, being at the head of meats and drinks, stand for all kinds of victual. Hence Josephus describes this as a kingly entertainment.

own reputation, acknowledged the seasonable and abundant refreshment which the king of Salem had afforded, by bestowing on him a tenth part of the booty he had won; thus acting, as was said of him on another occasion, "as a king to a king."

It is to this day a law of the desert, that if one tribe defeats another which has plundered a third, the conquering tribe is bound to liberate the persons belonging to the latter, but is entitled to retain all the booty which has been won, without distinguishing, unless it so please, to which of the parties it originally belonged. Conformably with a similar practice, the king of Sodom proposed that Abram should retain all the property, but restore to him all the persons he had recaptured. To this proposal the patriarch replied,—"I have lifted up my hand* unto Jehovah, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take from a thread even to a sandal-thong, and that I will not take anything that is thine, *lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich*." He mentioned such of the retaken victuals as his young men had already eaten as the only exception; and, with very proper delicacy, left his three Amoritish friends, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre, at liberty to retain that share of the spoil which custom allowed to them, and which it does not appear that they were incited by his example to decline.

Abram returned to his encampment in the valley of Mamre, and Lot returned to his abode in Sodom.

It appears very likely that the patriarch was troubled by some apprehensions of the return of the Assyrians, in greater force, to avenge their defeat: for to some such fears would seem to have been addressed the encouraging words which the Divine voice afterwards spoke to him:—"Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." But the heart of the patriarch was then faint from the thought of promises long postponed, and hopes long deferred, and he ventured to give expression to his feelings, and asked, Where was his hope of reward, when posterity was still withheld from him, and he saw no other prospect than that he should have to adopt his house-born servant, Eliezer of Damascus, as his heir. This, while it hints the existence of a custom of adoption still very common in the East, is remarkable for its omitting to notice any claims which Lot might be supposed to have in preference to Eliezer, and, perhaps, intimates that the estrangement between the uncle and nephew was greater than appears; or that some usage or custom, which we cannot detect, operated to oppose the succession of Lot when the separation of his clan from that of Abram had taken place.

The Lord only rebuked this distrust by new promises. He assured him that no adopted son, no blood relation, should be his heir, but his own very child: and again he was drawn forth and bade to look on the stars of heaven, and count them if he was able; for his seed should be as numerous as they. On this, Abram's wavering faith in the Divine promise was strengthened; and he again believed. The Lord then proceeded to remind him that he had been brought from a far country to inherit the land in which he dwelt; and was assured that he should inherit it indeed. His faith again started at this, and he asked, "Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?"

In those days, when men would make a most solemn covenant with each other, they proceeded thus:—they took one of every kind of beast or bird used in sacrifice—being a heifer, a she-goat, a ram, a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon. The beasts they divided, and laid the pieces opposite each other, at such a distance that a man could pass between them; but the birds, being small and of the same kind, were not divided, but placed entire opposite each other. Then the party making the agreement or covenant passed between the pieces, declaring the terms by which he bound himself to abide. As this was the strongest and most solemn method Abram knew of contracting a binding obligation, God thought proper to make use of it on this occasion. The patriarch was directed to make the customary arrangements; and having made them, he remained till evening watching the carcases, to protect them from injuries by beasts or birds. "And when the sun was gone down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and lo! horror and great darkness fell upon him." Then it was that God made a

* That is, "I have sworn."

larger and more distinct declaration of his intentions than the patriarch had hitherto received. He was informed that his early descendants should be afflicted four hundred years in a strange land, after which they should be brought forth from that land with great riches, to take possession of the promised country, the utmost limits of which, even to the Euphrates, were now defined, and the existing nations specified whose domains they should possess. Many reasons might seem obvious for the delay of which Abram is now first warned; but the only one assigned on this occasion is, that the iniquity of the nations to be dispossessed was "not yet full;" by which we are disposed to understand that they had not yet cast God utterly from their knowledge, into whatever errors of practice and opinion they had fallen. To Abram himself it was promised that he should be gathered to his fathers in peace, and buried in a good old age. The sun was now set, and it was dark, when the patriarch saw a cloud of smoke, like that of a furnace, accompanied by a flame of fire, pass between the severed parts to ratify the covenant; and by that fire the victims were probably consumed.

Sarai, the wife of Abram, desired a son no less fervently than her husband. But she had been considered barren before she left Mesopotamia; she was now seventy-five years of age; and she had waited ten years since their hearts were first gladdened by the promise of an heir. She therefore thought the case was hopeless as regarded herself; and began to reflect that, although a son had been promised to Abram, it had not been said, and did not necessarily follow, that this son should be the fruit of her own womb. Explaining these views to the patriarch, she prevailed upon him to resort to a custom of the time, of which there are still some traces in the East, under which the man takes a secondary wife, whose children become his undoubted heirs, equally with any other children he may have; and if the woman is the slave or attendant of the chief wife, or is provided by the chief wife, the children are, in a legal point of view, considered hers: and, in the same point of view, the condition of the actual mother remains unchanged, though in practice it necessarily sustains some modification from the operation of the feelings arising from the connexions which are formed, especially when her children are grown up. The female whom Sarai proposed to Abram as her substitute was her own handmaid, a woman of Egypt, named Hagar, who may be supposed to have been one of the female slaves whom the king of Egypt gave to the patriarch.* ( )



[Women of Egypt. Lower Class.]

* It is not unlikely that Hagar had been given to Sarai as her personal attendant while she was in Pharaoh's harem, and that she was allowed to retain her as such when she departed.

In due time it was known that Hagar had conceived; and the prospect of becoming the mother of Abram's long-promised heir had a mischievous effect upon her mind, leading her to treat her mistress with disrespect. Sarai, through whose preference and management all this had been brought about, was stung to the quick by this treatment, and complained of it to Abram with some sharpness, insinuating that, without some encouragement from him, Hagar durst not be so impertinent to her. The patriarch himself, respecting the rights of his wife, and displeased at Hagar's presumption (which those who know anything of Oriental women of her class, will believe to have been very coarsely and offensively manifested), reminded Sarai that the Egyptian was still her bond-servant, and that her authority was sufficient to prevent or punish the treatment of which she complained. Being thus assured that he would not interfere, Sarai proceeded to a more unsparing exercise of the powers with which she was invested, than the raised spirits of the Egyptian bondmaid could brook; and she therefore fled, directing her course towards her own country. It is a terrible and perilous thing for a woman, alone and on foot, to pass the desert which lies between the land of Canaan and Egypt; and we know not how one might do it and live. Nor did Hagar accomplish this enterprise; for she was as yet but upon the borders of the desert, and was tarrying for refreshment and rest by a well of water, when an angel of God appeared to her, and persuaded her to return and submit herself to her mistress; encouraging her to obedience by the assurance that the child she then bore in her womb would prove a son, whom she was directed to name Ishmael [God attendeth], because the Lord had attended to her affliction. She was also assured that this son should be the parent of a numerous race; and that while in his character, as typifying that also of his descendants, he should be wild and fierce as the desert ass—his hand against every man, and every man's hand against him—he should never be expelled or rooted out from the domain which God would give to him.* Thus instructed and encouraged, Hagar returned to her master's camp in the valley of Mamre; and in due season brought forth a son, to whom, in obedience to the angel's direction, Abram gave the name of Ishmael.

* This is the best interpretation we can give to the expression, "and in the face of all his brethren shall he dwell."



[Urfah—Ur of the Chaldees.]

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES.

(1) UR OF THE CHALDEES, p. 23, the birthplace of Abraham, has been generally regarded as a town; but such Orientalists as have of late years had occasion to express an opinion on the subject, have been rather disposed to regard it as the name of a district. As such, there is little reason to question that it is that which the text indicates, as it comprehends both the towns in which the names mentioned in this part of the history have been sought. Of these one is the town called by the Syrians Urhoi, and by the Arabians Orfah, or Urfah, which the Moslems firmly believe to be the Ur of the text; and the Jews and Christians of the country acquiesce in this conclusion. This town is situated at the foot of the mountains of Osroene, at the head of the great plain which was formerly so called, and is still a place of some consideration. Having in another place ('Pictorial Bible,' note on Gen. xi. 28) given the substance of the somewhat detailed account of this town which Buckingham supplies, we shall content ourselves with introducing the slight but clear general view of it which an earlier traveller took. Cartwright says, "The air of this city is very healthful, and the country fruitful. It is built nearly four-square, the west side standing on the side of a rocky mountain, and the east part trendeth into a spacious valley, replenished with vineyards, orchards, and gardens. The walls are very strong, furnished with great store of artillery, and contain in circuit three English miles, and for the gallantness of its sight it was once reckoned the metropolitical seat of Mesopotamia.' This traveller, as well as one who preceded him, Rauwolff, heedless of the analogy of name, regards Urfah rather as representing Haran than Ur. Although we think, ourselves, that a district is probably denoted, we have introduced a view of the town of Urfah, not only from respect to the common opinion, but because we suppose it was built within, and took its name from, that district.

(2) ABRAM THE YOUNGEST OF TERAH'S SONS, p. 23.—From the text, Gen. xi. 26, "Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran," if that text stood alone, it might appear that Abram was the eldest son and Haran the youngest. But a little farther on we learn that Terah was 205 years old when he died, and that at the same time the age of his son Abram was 75 years, whence it follows that his father was 130 years old at his birth. Thus it is seen that Abram was not born till 60 years after his eldest brother, who was born when Terah was 70 years old; and the length of the interval makes it probable that he was the youngest rather than the second son. It must therefore be understood that the putting of his name before those of his brothers in the sacred text is by way of eminence and preference rather than of seniority, even as in the enumeration of Noah's sons, the name of Shem occurs first, though Japhet was the eldest. That Haran rather than Nahor was the eldest of the three is not positively affirmed, but appears more than probable from circumstances, particularly from the fact that Nahor married one of the daughters of Haran, and Abram appears to have married the other. This last circumstance renders it likely that Nahor, as well as Abram, was a child of Terah by a second wife. That Terah had a second wife appears from Abram's statement to the king of Gerar (Gen. xx. 12) that Sarah was the [grand] daughter of his father, but not the [grand] daughter of his mother, implying that Terah had two wives; and seeing that Abram was born so very long after his eldest brother, it almost necessarily follows that he was the issue of the second rather than the first marriage.

The statement of the Arabian historians,* who make Terah to be the *grand*-father of Abram, and tell us that his father was called *Azar*, a lord in the court of Nimrod, would obviate some of the difficulties to which this note refers, but, for obvious reasons, the solution which it offers cannot be accepted.

(3) SARAH THE NIECE OF ABRAM, p. 24.—We are sensible that some of our readers, who have been accustomed to regard Sarah as Abram's step-sister, will be surprised to see her described as his niece. The text which bears on the subject is, "Abram and Nahor took them wives; the name of Abram's wife was Sarai; and the name of Nahor's wife Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah." (Gen. xi. 29, 30.) Now as there is an evident obscurity in this, arising from the introduction of the name of Iscah, it is well to see what the Jews understand on the subject, particularly as it is one in which they take a peculiar interest, while it involves no matter which their prejudices are likely to distort. They understand that "Iscah" in the text is but another name for Sarai; and conformably to this, Josephus† takes no notice of

* D'Herbelot, Biblioth. Orient., 12, 13.
† Antiq., l. i. c. 7. sect. v.

the name of Iscah; but simply informs us that Sarai and Milcah were the daughters of Haran, and became the wives of their uncles Abram and Nahor. Circumstances seem so highly in favour of this explanation, that it might be accepted on its own merits, apart from the Jewish testimony in its favour.

We need not point out how much the text we have cited improves in clearness if we substitute the name Sarai for Iscah, on the understanding that the two names belong to the same person, or rather that Iscah was the name originally borne by the woman who was afterwards * called Sarai. That Nahor married one of his brother Haran's daughters, suggests the probability—strengthened by the manner in which the two marriages are here mentioned—that Abram married the other. If this conjecture be not correct, it is not easy to see for what reason it should be so carefully noted that Haran the father of Milcah was also the father of Iscah; and if Iscah be not the same as Sarai, Iscah (which name never again occurs) is the only member of this family concerning whom we have not very particular information, and with whose matrimonial connexions we are not acquainted. And again, if Sarai be not the same as Iscah, the silence here observed as to her descent, when that of two other women is given, would seem a most singular omission, as it could not be but a great satisfaction to the Jews to be acquainted with their maternal as well as their paternal descent. According to the conclusion we have adopted, this information *is* conveyed; and these reasons have been deemed so satisfactory by the Jews themselves that the Targum of Jonathan, Jarchi, and other Jewish writers of the first reputation, allege that by "Iscah" Sarai is here to be understood, and that consequently Abram's wife was by birth the daughter of his half-brother Haran.

* Probably on her marriage, for the name means "my mistress," or "my lady," or "madame," and a name of this sort, in an age when names were really significant, was more likely to be borne by a married woman than a girl. Besides, it is observable that, if the above interpretation be accepted, the sacred writer calls her Iscah as a daughter, but Sarai as a wife. The Jews say that the name of Iscah was changed to Sarai on account of her beauty and housewifery.

([4]) Early Historical Documents, p. 24.—As the view stated in the text, concerning the existence of early historical documents to which the sacred historians refer, may not be familiar to all our readers, and is apt to startle those to whom it is new, it seems well to strengthen the statement by the insertion of the following passages from the 'Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures,' by the Rev. T. H. Horne, which also, as is seen, comprehends the view taken by the discreet and pious Matthew Henry.

"It is evident from an examination of the historical books that they are collections from the authentic records of the Jewish nation; and it should seem that although the substance of the several histories was written, under the divine direction, when the events were fresh in memory, and by persons who were evidently contemporary with the transactions which they have narrated, yet that under the same direction they were disposed in the form in which they have been transmitted to us by some other person long afterwards, and probably all by the same hand and about the same time. Nothing, indeed, is more certain than that very ample memoirs or records of the Hebrew republic were written from the commencement of the theocracy, to which the authors of those books very frequently refer. Such a practice is necessary in a well-constituted state. We have evidence from the sacred writings that it anciently obtained among the heathen nations (compare Esther ii. 23, and vi. 1); and there is evident proof that it also prevailed among the Israelites from the very beginning of their polity (see Exod xvii. 4). Hence it is that we find the book of Jasher referred to in Josh. x. 13, and 2 Sam. i. 18, and that we also find such frequent references to the Chronicles of the kings of Judah and Israel in the books of Samuel and Kings, and also to the books of Gad, Nathan, and Iddo. This conjecture is further strengthened by the two following circumstances, namely, *first*, that the days when the transactions took place are sometimes spoken of as being long since past;* and, *secondly*, that things are so frequently mentioned as remaining *to this day* (as stones,† names of places,‡ rights and possessions,§ customs and usages ‖), which clauses were subsequently added to the history by the inspired collectors, in order to confirm and illustrate it to those of their own age. The learned commentator Henry, to whom we are indebted for these hints, thinks it not unlikely that the historical books, to the end of Kings, were compiled by the prophet Jeremiah, a short time before the captivity: he founds this opinion upon 1 Sam. xxvii. 6, where it is said of Ziglag that 'it pertaineth to the kings of Judah unto this day;' which form of expression, he very justly remarks, commenced after the time of Solomon, and consequently terminated at the

* Thus, in 1 Sam. ix. 9, "he that is now called a prophet was *beforetime* called seer."

† See Josh. iv. 9; vii. 26; viii. 29; x. 27; 1 Sam. vi. 18.

‡ See Josh. v. 9; vii. 26; Judges i. 26; xv. 19; xviii. 12; 2 Kings xiv. 7.

§ See Judges i. 21; and 1 Sam. xxvii. 6.

‖ See 1 Sam. v. 5; and 2 Kings xvii. 41.

time of the captivity. The remaining five books, from Chronicles to Esther, he thinks it still more probable were compiled by Ezra the scribe, some time after the captivity; to whom uninterrupted testimony ascribes the completion of the sacred canon."

This is nearly as much as we have alleged in the text, and in some respects more. What we further think is, that many of the facts which were recorded in these contemporary documents, and which the sacred writers did not include in their accounts, might be preserved in the traditionary knowledge of the people after these original documents were lost. And further, we are disposed to extend the existence of such documents back to an earlier date than the commencement of the Hebrew polity. The very same sort of internal evidence which is produced in the above extract, may be adduced to show that the author of the book of Genesis only gives the substance of larger information which existed in some form or other. Some of this information transpires in long subsequent ages, showing that portions of it, at least, were still preserved. Thus the martyr Stephen assumes it as known to his audience that Abraham was called by God from Ur of the Chaldees; but this important fact is not recorded in Genesis, which only mentions the call from Haran, fifteen years later. Again, whoever reads carefully the commencing chapters of Chronicles will, from among the lists of apparently dry names, collect several very curious and important facts relating to times which had become ancient when that portion of historical Scripture was digested in its present form, and which are not included in those earlier portions of Biblical history which treat of the times in which the circumstances which thus transpire occurred. For instance, it is evident that, at that time, other information existed than the Pentateuch contains respecting the condition and proceedings of the Israelites during their sojourn in Egypt. The very remarkable circumstance which occurred in the lifetime of Ephraim, the son of Joseph, which is incidentally mentioned in 1 Chron. vii. 21—23, and there only, would alone suffice to render this manifest.

(5) ARABIAN HISTORY OF ABRAM, p. 26.—The particulars concerning the birth and youth of Abram which are believed by the Arabians, have been collected in a book called *Maallem*. These stories concerning the patriarch are obviously very ancient; for most of them are alluded to in the Koran as circumstances which were already matters of common knowledge among the Arabians.

We are told that Nimrod, who then reigned in Babylon, was one night astonished to see a star rise above the horizon whose light exceeded that of the sun. He consulted his diviners as to the meaning of this strange appearance, and they assured him, with one voice, that it signified the approaching birth of a mighty prince. Terrified at this, the tyrant gave such orders as he thought calculated to prevent the accomplishment of this event. But Adnah, the wife of Azar, a lord of Nimrod's court, conceived, and when her time drew near to be delivered, she hastened to a secret cave, and there brought forth her son. After a while she left him in the cavern, the entrance to which she well secured, and, returning to her husband, informed him that her child had died in the birth.

Adnah often returned to the cave to visit her hidden babe, and to give him the breast; and on all these occasions she found him sucking the ends of his fingers, and discovered that those of one hand furnished him with honey, and of the other with milk. The mother was at first astonished at this wonder; but her astonishment soon yielded to joy that it had pleased Providence thus manifestly to make her infant the special object of its care. Her astonishment and satisfaction were greatly increased, when she found that her child grew and ripened so quickly, that at the end of five moons he had every appearance of a boy five years old, and his mind was still more advanced.

As this precluded all apprehension of his coming under the operation of the decrees, which Nimrod had aimed at the existence of the eminent person whose then approaching birth the star had so lately indicated, Adnah no longer hesitated to acquaint her husband with all these circumstances, and Azar saw that he might safely avow such a child to be his son.

The father hastened to the cavern in which his son lay, and regarded him with much admiration and affection, and bestowed many caresses upon him. On his return, he declared to the anxious mother his intention to remove him to the city, with the view of ultimately introducing him to Nimrod, and placing him at court.

It was towards evening when Adnah went to the cave to conduct her son to the city of Babylon. In proceeding across the plain, they passed herds of oxen, camels, and horses, and flocks of sheep. The child, to whom, having been from his birth confined to the cavern, all the things which he saw were new and strange, asked his mother the name of whatever attracted his attention; and, in reply, Adnah fully instructed him in the names, qualities, and habits of the creatures which they passed.

At last he inquired who it was that had produced so many different beings; and was told by his mother that there was nothing in all the world which had not its creator and lord, on whom it depended. "If that is the case," said Abram, "who placed *me* in the world, and on whom do *I* depend?" "On me," replied Adnah, without hesitation. "Then who is *your* lord?" continued Abram; and his mother answered, "Azar, your father, is my lord." Abram did not rest satisfied with this; but proceeded to ask, "And who is my father Azar's lord?" and being told that it was Nimrod, he still wished to know who was the lord of Nimrod; but his mother, finding herself rather pressed for an answer, said, "You ought not, my son, to search into these things too closely, for they are dangerous for you."

In this time, when Nimrod reigned in Chaldea, the men of his empire worshipped divers gods. Some adored the sun, others the moon and the stars; and while some bowed themselves down before images, in which they recognised the presence of some divinity, others acknowledged no other divinity than Nimrod himself.

Abram continued, during the night, on his way across the plain to the great city; and as he went he indulged mentally in those inquiries which his mother had wished to repress. He looked up to the sky and beheld the stars, and the brightest of them all was Venus, whom many in that country adored. "Surely," he said within himself, "this must be the god, the lord of the world:" but, after a while, the beautiful luminary set and disappeared, and, after some further reflection, Abram said, "This cannot be the master of the universe; for it is not possible that he should be subject to such a change." His attention was next attracted by the moon, which soon after rose in the full, and he exclaimed with rapture, "Behold now, the divine creator, the god, appears!" But as time passed, he saw this planet also sink to the horizon and disappear; on which, with still greater disappointment, he made the same remark as before. The rest of the night was spent by him in deep thought, and when, in the morning, he arrived before the gates of Babylon, and beheld multitudes of people prostrate in adoration before the rising sun, "Wondrous orb," he thought, "thou indeed mightest easily be taken for the creator and lord of all nature, to which thou bringest light and strength; but I doubt that thou also wilt hasten to thy decline, and vanish even as the lesser stars; and how then canst thou be my creator, my lord, my god,—and where is He?"

When Azar presented his son to Nimrod, the monarch was seated upon an elevated throne, around which were ranged a great number of handsome slaves of both sexes. Abram soon inquired of his father who that personage so much elevated above the others might be? and was answered, that he was the lord of all those persons which he saw around him, and whom they all acknowledged to be their god. Upon this Abram attentively regarded Nimrod, who was of stern and disagreeable countenance, and said to Azar, "How is it that he whom you call your god has made his creatures more lovely than himself, seeing that the creator must needs be of a more perfect nature than his creatures?" This was the first occasion which Abram took to disabuse his father of his idolatry, and of preaching to him the unity of God, the Creator of all things, who had revealed himself unto him. The zeal which he testified on this and other occasions excited the choler of his father, and in the end drew him into great strifes with the courtiers of Nimrod, who refused to acquiesce in the verities which they heard from the young prophet. The rumour of these disputes at last reached the ears of Nimrod himself; and this proud and cruel prince threw him into a burning furnace, from which, nevertheless, he came forth in safety, without having sustained the least damage from the flames.

In the circumstances thus related there is something of character and something of Orientalism which renders the account pleasing, regarded simply as a fiction. This is not the case with the unmeaning and unimaginative hyperboles of the Talmud, which tells us, for instance, that Abraham was taller than all the giants, being as large and as strong, and requiring as much food as seventy-four common men: the rabbinical authorities differ, however, about his paces, one set assuring us that his every pace measured three miles, while another set allows that the feet of the patriarch did not span more than one mile at each step he took.

It will be seen, however, from what we have stated in the text, that the accounts which the Jews and the Arabians respectively give of Abram's early life coincide in some of the principal details.

(6) The first and second Calls of Abram, p. 27.—The first call is not noticed in the Old Testament, nor the second in the New. The history in Genesis merely relates that Terah took Abram and the other members of his family, "and they went forth from Ur of the Chaldees to go into the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran and dwelt there." But St. Stephen, in the discourse which occupies the seventh chapter of the Acts, supplies the antecedent command,—

"The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham while he was in [at Ur of the Chaldees] Mesopotamia, *before he dwelt in Charran*, and said unto him, Depart from thy land and from thy kindred, and come hither to a land which I will show thee. Then departing from the land of the Chaldees he dwelt in Charran."* The second call is given in the Old Testament after the account of this removal to Haran, and of Terah's death there after fifteen years. "Then the Lord said† unto Abram, Depart from thy land, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto *the* land which I will show thee." Gen. xii. 1. The difference between the two commands is obvious, and is pointed out in the page to which this note is appended. It will be observed that Abram himself was sixty years of age when he left Ur of the Chaldees and seventy-five when he left Haran and proceeded to the land of Canaan.

(7) CHARRAN, p. 27.—"Charran," as given by St. Stephen, is the proper reading of this name, and is, therefore, different from the name of Abram's brother, which is truly spelt Haran. The site of this place is very questionable. Most writers on Scriptural geography identify it with the place called Charræ by the Greeks and Romans, and renowned in history for the defeat of Crassus. But we are inclined to think that this identification is scarcely compatible with that which finds Ur in Urfah: for not only is this Charran in the same plain with Urfah, but is actually, at almost all times, visible from it, being distant not above eight hours' ride to the south; so that a removal to this distance hardly corresponds with the historical intimations which refer to it. There are three other sites to which different writers refer the Charran of our history. One is Oruros, on the Euphrates, about fifty miles below the embouchure of the Chaboras; the second is *Haræ*, about twenty miles to the E.N.E. of Palmyra; and the third Carræ, about thirty-eight miles N.E. from Damascus. All these places would, however, be out of the way in proceeding from Urfah to the land of Canaan, excepting the one near Damascus, which on many grounds we should hold to offer the preferable claim, were it not that the account of Jacob's journey to the same place expressly informs us that Haran was in Mesopotamia, on which ground the site, with the mention of which we commenced this note, must still be held to have a little the preference, notwithstanding the objections which apply to it, as none of the others answer to this condition. We think it very likely that the site of Ur, and more than likely that the site of Haran, is yet to be found.

(8) PRIMITIVE LONGEVITY, p. 27.—We need not remind the reader that the age of man before the deluge made a near approach to a thousand years; but, after that event, rapidly declined to the present standard (which it had certainly reached before the time of David), at which it has remained unaffected but by local influences. Many reasons have been given for the antediluvian longevity, and for the subsequent abridgment of human life; but they all fail in some point or other, excepting that which, proceeding on the observation that air is the agent by which, under all circumstances, the duration of life is most affected, infers that the superior purity of the air before the deluge —or, more properly, its superior fitness for the conservation of the living principle in man, was the operating cause of the long duration of antediluvian life; and that the gradual but quick contraction of man's life, which afterwards took place, was probably owing to some signal deterioration, caused by the deluge, in the wholesome properties of the primitive air. How the deluge may have produced such a change is another question, into which we need not enter.

At the time this history opens, the duration of life was about threefold that to which it ultimately fell; and, notwithstanding the gradual abridgment which took place, it remained twofold till about the time of the departure of the Israelites from Egypt. Terah himself died at the age of 205, which must have seemed but a reasonable old age, as it is considerably within the age attained by any of his ancestors, except his own father Nahor, who died prematurely at 148 years of age. But the operation of the abridging influence is best shown by figures, thus:—

	Years of Life.
Noah	950
Shem	600
Arphaxad	438
Salah	433
Eber	464
Peleg	230
Reu	239
Serug	230
Nahor	148
Terah	205

Here we see that Noah, nearly two-thirds of whose life had passed before the deluge, lived as long as an antediluvian; whereas his son

* The versions and most of the particulars in this note are from Hales.

† This call is injudiciously confounded with the former in the English Bible, incorrectly rendering the Hebrew, "Now the Lord *had* said to Abram, Get thee out of thy country," &c.—*Hales.*

Shem, most of whose life passed *after* the deluge, has one-third of the average duration of antediluvian life struck off from his. His son Arphaxad was born two years after the flood, and therefore may be taken to represent the first generation of entire postdiluvians, whose term of life is made one-third shorter than that of the semi-antediluvians, and (in two generations) is reduced to one-half that of the pure antediluvians. A rest at this point of reduction was allowed for three generations, after which the existing term of life was again halved, reducing it to a quarter of the antediluvian term. After three more generations, another reducing process commenced, not, as before, by abrupt halving of the previous term of life, but by a gradual reduction, which in about 500 years reduced the previous term of 230-40 years to about one-half, or 120 years; and in about 500 years more, we find that this term also had been nearly halved and brought down to the present standard; for at that time it is that David said, " The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow." (Psa. xc. 10.) The progress of the abridgment may be illustrated by a few more figures. Abraham died at the age of 175, being 40 years less than his father's age; and yet he is said to have died " in a good old age; an old man and full of years:" in like manner Isaac, who lived to 180, is said to have been " old and full of days;" and if these expressions do not embody the ideas of a writer who, from living in a later day, when the term of man's life was much shortened, naturally considered these as extreme old ages, we should be entitled from them to conclude—as was probably true after all—that a man was in those days called old, with reference to the age at which his contemporaries, rather than his predecessors, died. The patriarchs were very sensible that the term of life was undergoing abridgment. Thus, when Jacob stood before the Egyptian king, and was asked his age, he replied, " The days of the years of my pilgrimage are 130 years: few and full of evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage." He lived to 147 years. His son Levi lived to 137 years; and another of his sons, Joseph, only to 110 years. Amram, the son of Levi, lived to exactly the same age as his father; and Moses and Aaron, the two sons of Amram, both lived to 120. Our information of the steps by which life declined to " threescore years and ten" before the time of David, is less distinct.

But we principally wish to remind the reader of the probability—or rather the moral certainty—that the seasons of life, its childhood, youth, maturity, and age, were distributed over the whole period of life, however long, in much the same proportions as at present: so that the prime and old age commenced later and ended later than under a more abridged term of life. Thus we should not suppose that when the term of life was 140 years, a man of seventy was constitutionally older than one of thirty-five is now. This seems so obvious as to require little argument; and we are not disposed to discuss the question even were argument needed. But we may just observe that there is not wanting much positive proof in favour of this view. Thus we see those whose ages when their eldest son was born is recorded, are only in one instance under thirty —and that one instance is in the case of a man (Terah's father) whose whole age little exceeded half the average of his time. We see also that none of the Hebrew patriarchs had a son before he was forty. And when we take into account the general disposition to early marriages in the East, this may show that the age of manhood was reached much later than it has been since; and the activity and vigour, mental and bodily, which these same persons evince at an age far passing the present *extreme* term of life, shows that constitutional old age began late in proportion. The admiration which the beauty of Sarah excited when she was near seventy years of age also affords a strong corroborative illustration. The subject is one of considerable interest, and deserves a more attentive consideration than it can here obtain.

([9]) Flocks and herds, p. 28.—We may take this opportunity of correcting some prevalent impressions respecting the flocks and herds of the Bedouin shepherds We believe there is some such notion as that they have numerous herds of oxen as well as flocks of sheep, and that they traverse the desert with them at all seasons. This is not correct. The Arabian Bedouins have no oxen: sheep and goats are very common among them; but very ancient families among them have often only camels. The Hebrew patriarchs had oxen; and the difference requires some attention, the rather as some curious considerations are involved. In the first place, the Hebrew fathers, though nomades, and imbued with the ideas and practices of that class of people, were not desert nomades, but, for the most part, lived in the open parts of a country already settled and partly cultivated. Neither, as we have already shown, had they any occasion to cross deserts,

unless the comparatively short one between Canaan and Egypt. They were not, thus, of the class of Bedouins who are constantly moving into and from deserts, or between places which deserts separate. Hence, we imagine, proceeds their possession of oxen, which are not animals suited to live in, or to cross, such deserts as those of Arabia, and which, therefore, form no part of the wealth of a modern Bedouin. There must, however, have been something more than this to cause the difference; for the same is true of the sheep, which is, however, conducted across deserts, by taking advantage of those times of the year when even the desert ceases to be destitute of water and green herbage.

The patriarchs, in trafficking with the people of the towns and villages near which they lived, might have found an advantage in the possession of oxen which the Bedouin of the desert wants. But as even those Bedouins, who are somewhat similarly circumstanced with the patriarchs, do not keep oxen, there must be still some further reason for the difference. Perhaps there has been some change of appetite or use as to animal food. The patriarchs ate the flesh of the ox and calf; and the same was very commonly eaten in the nation which sprung from them. To entertain a stranger, or to make a feast, " a calf tender and good," or " the fatted calf" was slain; whereas now a sheep or goat, a lamb or kid, serves the same purpose. In fact, the present Orientals rarely eat beef, and a calf is never killed. Seeing, therefore, that the Bedouin does not like the flesh of the ox or the calf, that his other animals supply him abundantly with milk, hair and hides, while he has no need of horn, and lacks opportunity of turning the products of the ox to profitable account; seeing also that he has no need of its labour, and that its wants and habits are not well suited to his way of life—it may appear that inducements are wanting to the care and maintenance of so large an animal. Strictly speaking, the camel is, in fact, the only domestic animal suited by nature to cross the deserts during the summer and autumnal heats, not only from its power of abstinence from water, but because desert herbs, which other animals do not like, form its choice food; and because, while other domestic herbivorous animals require herbs juicy and green, the camel delights in herbage dried and parched by the sun, such only as the deserts offer during the season of heat. Flocks of sheep and other animals must be taken into or across the deserts in the spring, before the heats have dried the vegetation which has been excited by the rains of winter and early spring, if not before the water left in pits and hollows has been absorbed by the hot air; for while the herbage remains juicy and green, all the cattle of the Bedouins can do without water, exeept the horse. Under this condition of the desert, Bedouins with flocks of sheep not only pass through it, but encamp in it during winter and spring; but in summer and autumn they seek plains and valleys unconsumed by the extreme drought which pervades the length and breadth of the desert.

In speaking of the nomades of Western Asia as not now possessing herds of oxen, it ought not to be forgotten that those of *Eastern* Asia, —the great Tartar races,—do possess oxen, and make much use of them. This is not the only instance in which the developments of patriarchal life, as exhibited in the books of Genesis and Job, more strongly reminds us of nomade life among the Tartarian, than among the Arabian, races. The general analogy—the practices in which all agree—are so considerable, and the proximity of language and place gives such a preponderating advantage to the Arabian Bedouins, that it is seldom necessary to go further in search of illustration of the patriarchal usages or habits of life; but when this does become necessary, one is tolerably certain to find the additional elucidations in the customs of the nomades of the Tartarian deserts. In the possession of oxen the Tartars more resemble the patriarchs than do the Bedouins: they have such uses for this animal as the patriarchs had. They eat more animal food than the Arabians, and like the flesh of the ox; they also employ it as a beast of burden; and (which is perhaps more to *their* purpose) they prepare from its milk, for use during winter, a sour beverage called *griut*, which it does not appear that they are able to obtain from the milk of any other animal.

([10]) Page 29.—The information respecting the characteristics of the desert in the time of spring, which was at first designed for this place, it is now judged better to reserve for the *text* of a future chapter.

([11]) THE NAME OF JEHOVAH, p. 30.—Some of the Jewish ideas with reference to the ineffable proper name of God, are excusable on the ground of extreme reverence; but others are merely ingenious trifling, or trifling not always ingenious, nor always reverent. Our own theologians have fallen in with some of the Jewish notions on this subject. Most Christian translators of the Old Testament, including our own, generally abstain from introducing the name in their versions, putting

"the Lord" instead of Jehovah, in this following the example of the Jews, who, to avoid any attempt to pronounce the Name, read אדני, *Adonai*, instead of it; and of the Seventy, who sat down the word Κύριος in lieu of it. The Jewish notion in this matter is explained in the Talmud, on the authority of R. Nathan ben Isaac, who is reported to say, "In this world things are not as in the world to come. In this world we write the name of God with the letters יהוה (*Jehovah*), and read אדני (*Adonai*); but in the world to come we shall both read יהוה and write יהוה."*

However, as the meaning of some texts of Scripture is involved in the use of the proper name, it is well that more recent translators seem generally disposed to retain the word "Jehovah" in their versions. Although the word is now thus spelt, it does not afford the right spelling, and it is doubtful that the true pronunciation can now be recovered. For it will be observed, that while the abstinence of the Jews from pronouncing the word on any occasion was alone sufficient to occasion its loss, there is this further circumstance, that even in writing it, in the Hebrew copies of the Scriptures, the Masoretes did not attempt to give the word its original and proper vowels, but transferred to it those of the word *Adonai*, from which results the now usual spelling and pronunciation of "Jehovah." The word *Elohim*, God, is also sometimes substituted for it, as well as *Adonai*.

With all this, the Jews have rather been averse to the writing of the name at all, unless on very particular occasions; and have substituted for it various abbreviations and devices, to some of which high mystical qualities have been assigned. Thus, for instance, the mysterious name is sometimes written with two יי, and sometimes with three jods inclosed within a circle, thus (ייי): but this last very ancient form has been relinquished, and one of the jods is often expunged in old examples, in consequence of some resort having been made to it by Christians in demonstrating the doctrine of the Trinity.† The Jews are quite aware that the true pronunciation of the word is lost, and regard it as one of the mysteries to be unveiled in the days of the Messiah. They hold, however, that the knowledge of the Name does exist on earth, and he by whom the secret is acquired has, by virtue of it, the powers of the world at his command; and they account for the miracles of Jesus by telling us that he had got possession of the ineffable name. Rightly understood, they seem to mean that he who calls upon God rightly, by this his true name, cannot fail to be heard by him. In short, this word forms the famous *tetragrammaton*, or quadrilateral name, of which every one has heard. Some imagine that this was the same τετρακτυς which the Pythagoreans knew, and by which they swore; and that a knowledge was abroad in the world that the true name of the true God bore some such form as Jehovah may be traced in the Jah, Jao, Jevo, Jove, of the heathen.

It is remarkable, and we are unable to find a reason for it, that the Jews, who so carefully abstained from the utterance of this ineffable name, yet took particular pleasure to join that name to their own in a somewhat shortened form; in the beginning of a proper name they employed it as *Jeho*, as in Jehoshaphet, Jehoram, &c.; and at the end, as *Jah*, as in Mica-jah, Eli-jah, &c.; and sometimes in the very same name, either form is taken indifferently, thus:—Jeho-ahaz, in 2 Chron. xxi. 17, is Ahaz-jah in 2 Chron. xxii. 1; and so Jehoiachin, in 2 Kings xxiv. 8, Jechon-jah in 1 Chron. iii. 16.*

As a specimen of the ingenious trifling which we have mentioned, we may adduce the remark of Lightfoot, who tells us that twenty-six is the numerical value of the letters in the sacred name, and very seriously connects with this information the remark, that, when Sihon and Og were conquered, there had been twenty six generations—from Adam to Moses,—"and *accordingly* does Ps. cxxxvi. rehearse the durability six and twenty times over, beginning the story with the creation, and ending it in the conquest of Sihon and Og."† But enough of this.

(—) Abraham's Equivocation, p. 31.—This was not a subject which the fertile fancies of Abraham's rabbinical descendants were likely to leave *unimproved*. Accordingly, we have a Talmudical story, which tells us that on approaching Egypt, the patriarch put Sarah in a chest which he locked up, that none might behold her dangerous beauty. "But when he was come to the place of paying custom, the collectors said, 'Pay us the custom.' And he said, 'I will pay the custom.' They said to him, 'Thou carriest clothes.' And he said, 'I will pay for the clothes.' Then they said to him, 'Thou carriest gold;' and he answered them, 'I will pay for my gold.' On this they said to him further, 'Surely thou bearest the finest silk;' and then he replied, 'I will pay

* T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 50; apud Edzardi tractat. Talm. Avoda Sara, sive de Idololatria.

† 'Bartoloccii Bibliotheca Magna Rabbinica,' pars. i. p. 643.

* Lightfoot, 'Harm. of the Four Evang., in Matt. i. 11.

† 'Harmon. of the Old Testament,' Num. ch. xxi.

custom for the finest silk.' Then said they, 'Certainly it must be pearls that thou takest with thee;' and he only answered, 'I will pay for pearls.' Seeing that they could name nothing of value for which the patriarch was not willing to pay custom, they said, 'It cannot be but that thou open the box, and let us see what is within.' So they opened the box, and the whole land of Egypt was brightly illumined by the lustre of Sarah's beauty."*

([12]) THE TEREBINTH-TREE OF MAMRE, p. 36. —It is generally understood now that the word usually rendered *plain* in our version, means a terebinth (or turpentine) tree; and as the word is plural in the present case, the text would mean that Abram encamped under the terebinth-trees of Mamre. The fact that the site in which the trees grew is actually a valley or plain enables us to combine both interpretations. The ancient celebrity of an old terebinth-tree in this valley, under the shade of which Abram was believed to have entertained the three angels, has been given in the 'Pictorial Bible' (note on Gen. xiii. 18). Morison says that at the time of his visit an old tree was still pointed out as that to which this statement refers; but, with his usual good sense, he indicates the improbability that the tree should have remained standing for 3500 years, and wishes his informants had been content to state that this tree occupied the same ground, and that, from age to age, care had been taken thus to mark a site so distinguished. After a long interval, the neighbourhood of Hebron begins to be again visited by European travellers; but we do not find that any of them take notice of the valley of Mamre or of the trees which may be growing there.

([13]) THE HEBREW NAME, p. 38.—The name of Hebrew, on this occasion first given to Abram and afterwards borne by his descendants, has been very commonly supposed to have been derived from Heber, the fifth in descent from Noah. "But it is hardly probable that Abraham would call himself by this name, rather than by that of any of his ten predecessors; and we rather think that it was given him by the Canaanites, because he came thither from the other side of the Euphrates; the word עבר, *Heber*, signifying, in the original, the other side, whether of a river, sea, or any other thing; in which sense some people are called *transmarine*, *transalpine*, and the like. What seems to confirm this etymology is, that we do not find that he was called by this name, till word was brought him of his nephew Lot's misfortune, so that it is likely the messenger inquiring for Abraham of the inhabitants, might describe him by the word עברי, *Hibri*, or one that came from the other side of the river. However, after Jacob had received the great name of ISRAEL, Abraham's descendants preferred that of Israelites to that of Hebrews, though the neighbouring nations still called them by the latter."—'Ancient Universal History,' vol. iii. p. 24.

([14]) HAGAR, p. 41.—The Jewish tradition (a marvellously unlikely one) is that Hagar was a daughter (by a concubine, as some say) of Pharaoh, who, seeing the wonders wrought on account of Sarai, said, "It is better that my daughter should be a handmaid in this household, than a mistress in another," and, therefore, gave her to Sarai.* The Moslems, in virtue of her being the mother of Ishmael, treat her name and memory with great respect. They allege (what in a limited sense is true) that she was the legal wife and not the concubine of Abram; and that Ishmael, by his seniority, had a great advantage over Isaac, which, say they, is indeed evinced by the difference of their inheritances—Arabia, which fell to the share of Ishmael, being a much more extensive and rich country than the land of Canaan, which became the portion of his younger brother. They believe that Hagar died at Mecca, and was buried within the outer enclosure of the temple of the Kaabah.†

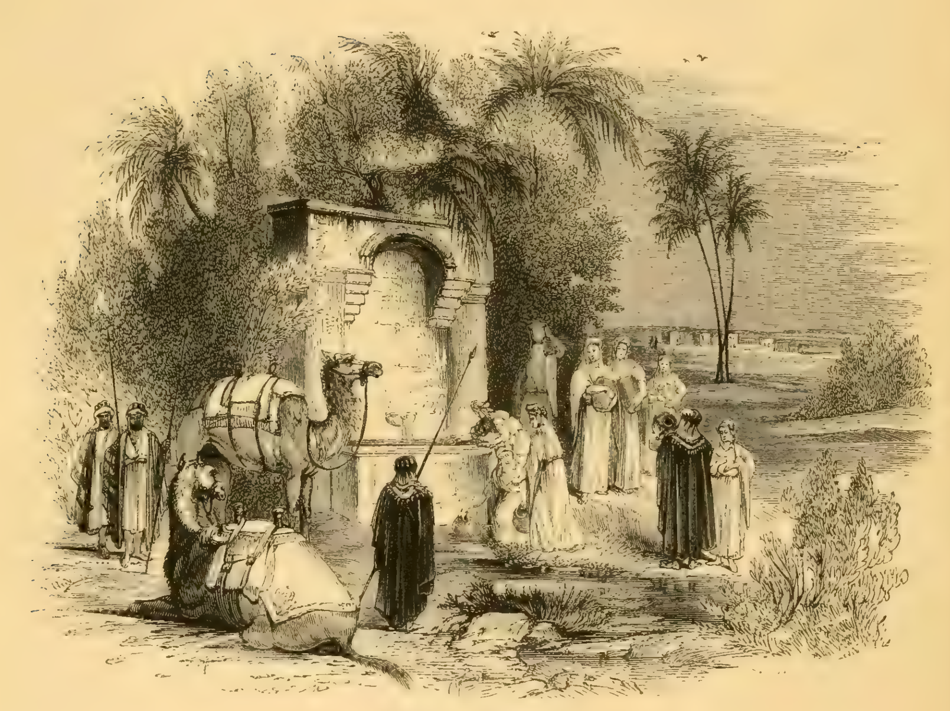
* 'T. Bab. Bereshith Rabba,' 40; cited in 'Stehelin's Traditions,' ii. 88.

* Targum Jonath. and Jarchi in Gen. xvi. 1; Bereshith Rabba, p. 40, 2; Pirke Eliezer, c. 26.

† D'Herbelot, Biblioth. Orient. in *Hagar*.

CHAPTER III.

ABRAHAM AND ISAAC.



[Well, with Camels.]

After the birth of Ishmael thirteen years passed away, during which it would seem that both Abram and Sarai were well satisfied to rest in the conclusion, that the son of Hagar was the long-promised and divinely-appointed heir of the patriarch. They had the less doubt of this, seeing that Abram was now on the verge of 100 years old, and the age of Sarai was only ten years less. It was at this time that Abram was again favoured with a manifestation of the Lord's presence ; and no sooner did he hear the Divine voice, than he fell upon his face, and remained in that most reverent of postures while it continued to speak to him. He was reminded that there was a covenant of God with him, that he should be the father of many nations. And, as a sign of this, he was directed—according to a custom, which has to this day remained common in the East, of changing the name to render it significantly applicable to new developments and circumstances—to call himself no longer Abram (*high father*), but Abraham (*father of a multitude*). On this occasion the Lord's communications to the patriarch were unusually full and explicit, and cleared up much which remained previously uncertain—thus corroborating an observation already made, that at every fresh appearance to him, he received, not only confirmations of what had been already promised or foretold, but an addition to his previous knowledge. So now, while the promises as to the future Hebrew race are confirmed,

Abraham now first learns that he is to be the father of other races—many races; for, lest he should suppose that the plurality applied to the subdivisions in the race of the heir of the promise, he is told, "I will make *thee* exceeding fruitful, and nations shall come out of thee." He is further assured of the permanency—the continuing effect to his posterity—of the covenant made with him,—that He, JEHOVAH, would not only be his God, but the God of the chosen race to spring from him, and that the land in which he was a stranger should be their permanent possession. To be as an enduring and ineradicable token of this covenant, sealed in their flesh, the rite of circumcision was instituted, and directed to be exercised, not only upon Abraham himself and his son Ishmael, but upon all the males of his household, whether they had been born in that household or obtained by purchase or gift from strangers. And this was to be, in all future generations of Abraham's descendants, the perpetual sign of a perpetual covenant, insomuch that he who did not receive the sign in his flesh, should be regarded as an alien to the covenant, and disentitled to any share in its benefits. In all future time the rite was to be administered on the eighth day from the birth of the child, probably because (as in the case of animals destined for sacrifice under the law) a child was not considered perfect, or cleansed from the impurities of its birth, until seven days had passed over it.

Much inquiry has been directed to the institution of this rite and the objects connected with it; but we will not here detain the reader with the view of these matters which we are ourselves disposed to take, but rather refer him to a note which is subjoined to this chapter. ([1])

After the directions which were given in the matter of circumcision, it pleased God to furnish the first distinct intimation that Sarai was to be the mother of the heir of the promises. In the first place, and introduced by the words, "As for Sarai thy wife"—he is directed to call her no longer Sarai [or *my princess*, appropriatively], but Sarah [or *princess*, indefinitely and at large]; the reason for which change is given or implied in the immediately-following promise:—"And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her." The ideas thus presented to the mind of Abraham were so new and strange to him, after he had been so long resting in the conclusion that Ishmael was the promised heir, and had so thoroughly dismissed all expectation of issue by Sarah, that he laid his face still closer to the ground, and laughed within himself, as he thought of the confirmed barrenness of his wife and the old age of both; yet less, probably, as being incredulous or doubtful, than as being struck by the singularity of such circumstances.*

But then, as our affections are engaged by that which we know, and the heart takes no cognizance of ties which do not yet exist, the mind of Abraham turned to his living son Ishmael, whom he knew and loved, and whose claims to the inheritance of the promise he seems at the time to have considered quite sufficient; or, rather, his anxious desire for posterity had found a rest in Ishmael, and that rest he was, perhaps, not quite willing to have disturbed by the question of inheritance being again laid open. He, therefore, ventured gently to intimate his willingness—even his desire—that Ishmael should be regarded as the heir of the promise, by whispering, "O that Ishmael might live before thee!" But God, in answer to this, renewed the declaration of his purpose, that the promised heir must be born of Sarah, and assured him that she should bear him a son indeed; and then, at once to commemorate and gently rebuke the secret laughter of heart with which he had first received this intimation, it was directed that the name of Isaac [*laughter*] should be given to this son, whose birth within a year was distinctly promised. But although the Lord had clearly intimated that this unborn son was he with whom the Divine covenant would be established, the patriarch's regard for Ishmael was respected, and his anxiety for his welfare satisfied, by the assurance

* Some interpreters tell us that he laughed *for joy*, in spite of the ideas which the sacred narrative so distinctly connects with his laughter. Nothing is more preposterous and revolting than these constant attempts to obliterate all the shades which the sacred narrative employs freely in drawing the characters of the most favoured saints, and by which it renders them true human portraitures of beings with whose feelings we can sympathise, because they are natural and we can understand them. Abraham, for instance, was a good and true-hearted man, but surely he was not more than a man.

that he should be blessed abundantly in the usual objects of a Bedouin chief's ambition and desire,—he should be multiplied exceedingly, the honoured founder of twelve tribes who should, collectively, form a great nation.

We have dwelt particularly on this most remarkable act of intercourse, principally on account of its historical importance; for the Divine intentions—which are so largely developed on this occasion—are not to be treated as incidents, but as *the* great animating and guiding principle in the early Hebrew history; but also on account of the very beautiful manifestation which it offers of that condescension to human feeling, that gentleness and that tender consideration, which the Hebrew Scriptures ascribe to the Lord of the Universe.

During the heat of the day the interior of the tent is usually close and oppressive; and the Bedouin likes then to sit near the entrance, on the shady side—that, while protected from the sun, he may enjoy the comparative freshness of the open air. Abraham was sitting thus, about three months after this transaction, when he saw three strangers approaching, who bore the appearance of wayfaring men. Exactly as a Bedouin would do at the present day, the patriarch no sooner saw them than he hastened to press his hospitality upon them. For the reason we have just stated, he did not ask them into his tent, but invited them to sit under the shade of his terebinth-tree, until victuals should be got ready for them, and water brought to refresh their feet and cleanse them from the dust of travel. To be allowed thus to entertain strangers is the first personal ambition of the less-corrupted Bedouins; and so sincerely do they feel that they are the favoured parties, and so deep the shame to them of having their hospitality rejected, that we are not—as our differing customs might suggest—to suppose that the patriarch on this occasion proceeded in a manner unusual to him; although there was that in the dignified appearance of one of the three strangers, which, while it led Abraham to single him out as the proper person to be addressed, may have induced him to accost him as "my lord," and to "bow himself towards the ground" more reverently than was his wont. This dignified stranger graciously accepted the invitation of the patriarch, and desired him to do as he had said.

The manner in which Abraham proceeded to provide an entertainment for the strangers, and the expedition with which this appears to have been accomplished, afford us much instruction, and serves to show very clearly that the main usages of nomade life are unchanged to this day. The preparation of bread, even to the grinding of the corn, is the exclusive work of women; and as the bread is made merely as the temporary occasion requires, and none is kept in hand from one day to another, a baking of bread always attends the arrival of a stranger. Abraham, therefore, hastened into the tent to Sarah, and desired her to make ready quickly three measures of fine flour, and to knead it and bake cakes upon the hearth. He then hastened to the herd, and took from thence a calf, "tender and good," which he gave to one of his young men to slay and dress; and this indicates the antiquity of another Bedouin custom, of slaying an animal for the entertainment of a stranger arrived in the camp; and also shows that even then the Orientals had no objection to meat which had been cooked before the vital warmth had departed from it. (2) Abraham had only promised to bring "a morsel of bread to comfort their hearts;" but now, with the bread, he brought the calf, with some of those preparations of butter and milk, for which pastoral tribes have in all ages been renowned. Having brought the meat, he sat not down with them to partake of it; but, according to a still-subsisting method of showing respect, he stood by his visitants under the terebinth-tree while they ate. (3)

Sarah remained in the tent. The women do not generally make their appearance on such occasions; and it is considered in the last degree impertinent for a stranger to take notice of their existence, or to make any inquiries about them. Abraham must therefore have been not a little startled when the seeming principal of the strangers abruptly asked him, "Where is Sarah thy wife?" and that the stranger should know her by a name so recently imposed, may well have increased his surprise. He answered, shortly, "Behold, in the tent." On which the stranger, by declaring that Sarah should in nine months become the mother of a son, revealed his high character to the patriarch; and, accordingly, he is, in the remainder

of the account, distinguished by the ineffable name of JEHOVAH. As they were sitting just outside the tent, Sarah herself, who was within it, heard what passed, and she laughed incredulously to herself, knowing well that not only had she ever been barren, but that she was past the time of life at which all the women of her day ceased to bear children. On this the Lord asked why she had laughed, and why she was incredulous; for was there anything too hard for the Lord? and he ended in repeating the terms of the assurance he had just given. Sarah, being afraid, and knowing that no one could have heard her laughter, ventured to deny that she had laughed; but was stopped by the rebuke, "Nay, but thou didst laugh."

Soon after, the strangers arose, and departed, directing their course towards the vale of Siddim; and Abraham went with them a part of the way. As they proceeded, the Lord condescended to make known to him the object of the present motion towards Sodom; which, speaking after the manner of men, as one who needed to examine and inquire before proceeding to judgment, he does in these words;—"Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; I will go down now and see, whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; AND IF NOT, I SHALL KNOW." The other two then went on in advance towards Sodom, while Abraham remained alone with the Lord. The patriarch knew what interpretation to put upon the last ominous words; and the character of the inhabitants of the plain was too well known to him to permit him to cherish a hope for them, as matters now stood. He therefore, having himself had large experience of the Lord's tender mercies, ventured, although feeling that he was but "dust and ashes," to draw near and speak to him on their behalf. It was not possible, he knew, but that the Judge of all the earth should do right; and, therefore, far must it be from him to slay the innocent with the wicked. But, yet more, the patriarch urgently desired that, for the sake of only a few just men in Sodom, the whole city might be spared. He named fifty; but after this request had been granted, his recollection of the intense corruptions of Sodom made him anxious to reduce the number to the lowest possible limit; and therefore, by successive petitions, all readily yielded to him, he gradually brought down the number to ten, for the sake of which small number of righteous men the Lord declared that even Sodom should not be destroyed.

The Lord then departed on his way, but not—at least not in bodily form—to Sodom; and Abraham returned to his tent in Mamre.

It was even-tide when the two angels came to the town of Sodom. Lot was then sitting at the gate, and, influenced by those old Bedouin habits of hospitality in which he had been brought up, he advanced to meet them, and after proper testimonials of respect, such as Abraham before had shown, he invited them to become his guests for the night, after which they might rise early in the morning and pursue their way. There were in those days no such caravanserais, or lodging-houses, as now afford house-room to friendless travellers in the towns of the East; and, therefore, in at first declining the kind offer of Lot, they expressed an intention of spending the night in the street. But he pressed them greatly, so that they at last yielded, and went with him to his house, where "he made them a feast, and baked unleavened bread, and they did eat." After they had supped, and before they lay down, the house of Lot was surrounded by a great mob, composed of "both young and old, all the people from every quarter," which large expressions are no doubt designedly employed, to acquaint us with such universal depravity in Sodom as rendered her unable to furnish the ten righteous men on whom her salvation depended. The object which thus assembled them together—the abominable outrage they contemplated on Lot's angelic guests—exhibits a degree and shape of moral guilt of which we could have had no previous idea when told, in general terms only, that "the men of Sodom were sinners before the Lord exceedingly." Lot, whose Bedouin notions of hospitality required him to incur any sacrifice, and risk any danger, rather than that any evil should befall those who had come under the shadow of his roof, went out to the mob, shutting the door after him; and after expostulating with them on the enormity of the conduct they contemplated, endeavoured to pacify them by the offer of a revolting alternative, which, while it shows the sense he entertained of the supreme obligation of his hospitable duties,

emphatically illustrates the difficulty in which he was placed, and his sense of the character of the people with whom he had to deal. Nothing can, more strikingly than this last act of their history, evince that the measure of their iniquity was indeed full to overflowing. So far from listening to Lot, they were enraged at his interference, and after reviling him as an intermeddling stranger, attempted to lay hold of him, with the threat to deal worse with him than with his guests. It was now high time for the angels, whom Lot was entertaining unawares, to interfere by the exercise of the powers with which they were invested. As the mob pressed on, not only to seize Lot, but to break the door open, the angels opened it themselves, and pulling Lot into the house, shut it again. They then smote the brutal mob with distorted vision, whereby objects were presented so falsely or confusedly to their sight that they fancied they saw the door where it was not, and did not see it where it was: thus were baffled all their attempts to find the door, in which, unknowing what had befallen them, they madly persevered until they were wearied out. The angels then told Lot, that if he had any natural or acquired relatives in the town whose lives he wished to preserve, he must hasten to remove them with him from the place; "For," said they, making known their character and their avenging mission, "we are about to destroy this place: for great before Jehovah is the cry of their" [its people's] "guilt; and Jehovah hath sent us to destroy it." On this Lot went into the town to the men, to the husbands of his married daughters, to exhort them to flee with him from the doomed city. But they received his communication and warning as an idle jest.

When the morning dawned, the angels hastened Lot to depart with his wife and two unmarried daughters, that they might not be consumed in the ruin which hovered over the guilty city. Lot appears to have been attached to a place in which he had lived so many years; probably he had much property to leave in it; and, above all, his married daughters were left there with their infatuated husbands. ([4]) All these things made him linger as one reluctant to depart; and, perceiving this, the angels laid a gentle restraint upon them, taking them by their hands, and leading them forth beyond the city. One of them then charged the party to hasten for their lives, and not to make any stay in the plain, or even to look behind them, till they reached the mountains on the borders of the vale; from which it appeared that the Divine judgment was not to be confined to the town of Sodom, but that the other cities of the plain were to be involved in its doom. Lot looked forward, and seeing that the mountains to which he was directed to escape lay at a considerable distance, ventured to entreat to be excused from so far a flight on so urgent an occasion, and that the near town of Bela might be allowed him for a refuge. This request involved a desire that this town should be preserved, in excuse for which liberty, he pleaded the *smallness* of the place; whence, his request being granted, it was afterwards known by the name of Zoar [*small*]. This town being spared for his sake, he was directed to hasten thither; for that the impatience of the Divine indignation could not be appeased till he arrived there safely. So they hastened down the valley; and the sun had not yet risen when they entered Zoar. *Then* the destruction, sudden and overwhelming, came; and not only did it overthrow and devour the cities of the plain, and all the inhabitants, and the growth of the ground, and every living thing, but it cut off the Jordan in its course, and absorbed the very plain itself: the surface of which, once blooming like another Eden, no man has beheld since that day; but, instead thereof, a bitter, sulphureous and fœtid lake, the Lake of Death, which has from that hour to this remained one of the wonders of the earth.

The examination of the agencies which it pleased God to employ in effecting this great overthrow, and the description of the existing Asphaltic Lake, are subjects which need not interrupt the present narrative, as they more suitably belong to the other division of this work. It suffices now to mention, that when Abraham, who was probably roused by the shock and noise of this terrible convulsion, got up early that same morning, and hastened to the place where he had interceded with Jehovah, "he looked towards Sodom and Gomorrah, and towards all the land of the plain, and beheld, and lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace." Then he but too well knew that he had judged all too favourably

of Sodom, when he had reckoned that at least ten righteous men might be inclosed within its walls. Although he had not expressly named Lot in his intercession, he doubtless now felt very anxious for him, as it could not yet be known to him that in this great destruction the Lord had remembered Abraham, and had delivered his nephew from the overthrow of the city in which he dwelt.

And yet all the party which left Sodom were not saved. The destruction, as we have said, commenced the instant that Lot entered Zoar; and his wife, who, too curiously or incredulously, lingered behind, regardless of the strict injunctions which had been given, suffered the dreadful consequences, by being involved in that destruction which extended to the very border of the city which had been given to Lot for his refuge. She was overwhelmed and smothered in the spray of the igneous and saline matters which filled the air; and which, gathering and hardening around her, left her incrusted body with some resemblance to a mass of rock-salt. Lot tarried not long in Zoar; but removed to the mountains to which he had at first been directed to escape. We are told that he was afraid to dwell there; but whether on account of the danger and annoyance from the unwholesome vapours and mephitic effluvia proceeding from the combustion of the plain, or from the apprehension that the town would be swallowed up by the increase of the waters which were collecting in the basin of this inclosed plain, are alternatives left open to conjecture:* but whatever moved him to it, the resource which he adopted was less out of the way, at that time and in that place, than it seems to us; seeing that probably it had been his yearly custom, while living in the vale of Siddim, to remove during the season of heat to the mountains, and to abide there in one of the cool caves they offered, perhaps in the very cave to which he now resorted. To live thus in caves during summer has ever been a favourite practice, wherever such caves are to be found, in this region; and if Lot had some property remaining, his condition was not so much altered but that it was as natural, or more natural, that he should take this usual course, than that he should go and claim the hospitality of his kinsman Abraham, which some needlessly wonder that he did not do. And that he had property is more than likely; not, indeed, as some preposterously conceive (from finding that he had wine in the cave), that he and his daughters had escaped from Sodom laden with provisions, wine, and other necessaries, but that his flocks and herds were out with his servants and shepherds, beyond the limits of the ruined plain; and their return to him afforded the means of obtaining from the townspeople whatever provisions or other goods he required.

In his caverned retreat a new and unexpected evil befel Lot. His daughters, like all eastern women, and especially all women of Bedouin parentage, looked upon the possession of children as the best and brightest hope of their existence; but they saw none on earth whom they might expect to marry. They knew not that any of their father's family and connections existed, to become their husbands; and the example of their sisters, who had perished in Sodom with their husbands, made them afraid, if willing, to entertain the notion of a marriage with Canaanitish husbands. They therefore most wickedly managed, on two successive nights, to intoxicate their father with wine, and in that condition, and without his clear knowledge of what was done, to procure issue by him. A son to each daughter was the result of this transaction. The eldest daughter gave to her son the name of Moab [*from a father*], and the younger called hers Ben-Ammi [*son of my people*], which latter name, intimating the mother's satisfaction in the fact that the child was a son of her own race, corroborates the view we have taken of the motives by which the women were influenced, and which seems to us far preferable to the notion that they supposed that all the inhabitants of the earth, except their father and themselves, were destroyed in the overthrow of Sodom. We do not see how it is possible that they could have entertained any such impression. Be this as it may, the sons which were born to them were the progenitors of the Moabites and Ammonites,—

* The Jewish writers have a tradition that Zoar, though temporarily spared for the sake of Lot, was destroyed within the year after Sodom. Josephus seems to say, that while Lot was at Zoar the place was destitute of inhabitants and provisions; but this appears incredible under all the circumstances. If there were no people in Zoar, what became of them, how were they destroyed, since the general destruction did not commence till Lot had entered Zoar?

nations well known in a later age for their enmity to the house of Israel. Thus much of Lot of whom the sacred history takes no further notice.

Not long after the destruction of Sodom, Abraham removed from the valley of Mamre, where he had lived so many years, and proceeded southward, towards the desert border of Palestine, and encamped* near a place called Gerar, between Kadesh and Shur. What occasioned his removal at this particular juncture does not appear; but it has been with sufficient plausibility conjectured, that he could not bear the stench which at that time arose from the sulphureous lake where the cities of the plain had been.

This is the first time we read of any place called Gerar, which, it appears, lay in what was even then known as the land of the Philistines; or that any mention is made of a people of that name as occupying any part of the country. But they now were settled in the country of which Gerar was then the capital; for although the Abimelech who reigned at that place is only called "king of Gerar" on the present occasion, his successor, of the same title, who reigned there in the time of Isaac's manhood, is distinctly called "king of the Philistines." It thence results that the remarkable people of that name had already arrived in the country, seeking a settlement; and finding the settled people, whom, coming themselves from the south, they first met with in the land of Canaan, to be in possession of a fine and fertile territory, from which they deemed themselves strong enough to expel them, they made the attempt, and succeeded in it. All this is clear; but there are some questions connected with the origin and early history of the Philistines which claim from us some such attention as we have given to the subject in a note. (5)

Abraham had not long been at Gerar before an incident occurred remarkably similar to that which had some years before happened in Egypt. Uncorrected by the experience he had then gained, and still tormented by the fears by which he had then been influenced, the patriarch gave out, on his arrival at this strange place, that Sarah was his sister. As, according to a still subsisting custom among the Bedouin nations, unmarried females go unveiled, while betrothed and married women are heedful to screen their beauties from the eyes of strangers, Sarah was obliged to dispense with her matrimonial veil, the better to support the character of Abraham's sister. Hence she was the sooner seen by Abimelech, the king of Gerar, or by those who described her to him; and the consequence was, that he sent and took her to his harem. For this act, he and his household were smitten by the Lord, as Pharaoh had before been smitten; and in a dream he learnt wherefore this infliction came upon him, namely, because he had taken away the wife of another man. In extenuation, Abimelech, who, as an Oriental king, did not see any harm in taking away a man's sister without his or her consent, alleged his ignorance of the more intimate relation between them, and protested that in the integrity of his heart and the innocency of his hands he had done this. His anxious inquiry, "Jehovah, wilt thou also slay a righteous nation?" possibly intimates an apprehension of some such avenging calamity as that by which the cities of the plain had been lately overthrown; while at the same time it manifests his knowledge of the true God by his peculiar name; and of Him, the answer of the heavenly vision leaves it unquestionable that Abimelech was a worshipper. His excuse was admitted; he was informed that Abraham was a prophet, at whose prayer, when his wife should be restored to him, the fatal malady by which the king's house-


[Woman Veiled.]

* We say "encamped;" but as the text is that "he sojourned *in* Gerar," we do not feel assured but that he might at first have lived in the town, as Lot had lived in Sodom.

hold was visited would be removed. The king gat up early in the morning, and told all this to his wondering servants. He then sent for Abraham, and remonstrated with him, rather impressively, for having concealed the true relationship between Sarah and himself. To this the patriarch could only allege his fear of being slain for her sake, in places where he supposed the fear of God did not exist; taking care to add, that he had not untruly stated the near connection by birth, although he had concealed the nearer ties which existed between them. Abimelech then made the patriarch liberal gifts of sheep and oxen, and men-servants and women-servants; and told him that he was at liberty to dwell in any part of the land which he pleased. On returning Sarah to her husband, the king took occasion to administer a very graceful reproof, telling her that he had given her "brother" a thousand shekels weight of silver, with which he might purchase for her such a veil as it became a married woman to wear.*

The joy, so long expected, and so long delayed, came at last; and at the date specially appointed by God, being exactly one year from the time that Abraham entertained the angels under the terebinth tree, Sarah gave birth to a son. To this son the name of Isaac was given, with a joyous feeling† which suggested to Sarah a more pleasant application of the name than in the circumstances which gave the first occasion for it. She nourished the infant from her own breast, probably not less than three years;‡ and a great feast signalized the day on which the heir of the promises was weaned.

In consequence of the changes and modifications of feeling and expectation which the event quite naturally occasioned, the birth and growth of Isaac did not bring unmixed satisfaction to the family of Abraham. Sarah, a woman on the verge of old age, unexpectedly gratified with a son, naturally enough threw the whole force of her affections upon him, to the gradual neglect and ultimate dislike of Ishmael, to whom, as her actual blessing, she appears to have been considerably attached before her greater blessing in Isaac came. Of Hagar's feelings we know nothing positively, but from our previous knowledge of her, we can readily conclude that it was with no pleasant impressions that she saw the consequence of her own son, now growing up to manhood, much diminished, and many of his expectations superseded by the young stranger. The mind of the rough youth himself appears to have been somewhat irritated by the comparative neglect into which he had fallen; and he seems to have occasionally manifested unkind feelings towards the child by whom this had been unconsciously produced. The patriarch himself appears to have been the least altered of the three. The sturdy character of Ishmael was not likely to be displeasing to a pastoral chief; and while the heart of Abraham was large enough for both his sons, each of whom he was willing to see in the several stations which Providence had assigned them before their birth, it is probable that his first-born still possessed a higher place in his affections than the infant Isaac had yet won.

An occasion soon occurred on which the operation of these different feelings was manifested. At or not long after the great feast which Abraham made when Isaac was weaned, Ishmael grievously offended Sarah, probably not for the first time, by some derision or ill-treatment of the young heir, to which Hagar appears, in some way or other, to have been a party. The wrath of Sarah was warmly excited, and she passionately insisted to Abraham that Hagar and her son should both be sent away, declaring that "the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac;" which is probably levelled at some intention which Abraham was known to entertain of dividing his actual property between his sons, leaving to Isaac the heirship of those higher hopes which belonged to him. Such an intention was in itself so proper and customary, that in a later age it was applied to such cases by the law of Moses. The demand of Sarah was very grievous to the patriarch. But God, who on a

* Many different interpretations of Abimelech's speech to Sarah have been given, and after a careful examination of them all we adhere to this (which has already been given in the 'Pictorial Bible,') as the only one which appears to us to receive illustration from the ideas and usages of the East.

† See p. 53. *Now* Sarah says, "God hath made me to *laugh*, so that all that hear shall *laugh* with me."

‡ It is still very common in the East to suckle a child for two or three years; and that this was the practice among the Jewish women appears from various instances. If, as we suppose, the physical developments of children were protracted in proportion to the then longer duration of the whole term of life, Isaac may very possibly have been considerably *mor* than three years old when weaned.

former occasion interposed to prevent a separation, and obliged Hagar to return to the mistress from whom she had fled, now indicates his high approval of the course which the displeasure and passion of Sarah had suggested. This difference of procedure is evidently another instance of the operation of the divine intention of keeping the chosen race alone and apart from even collateral combinations. Yet He, who knew well the nature of those affections which He has implanted in man to bless and cheer his existence, gave not his sanction to this harsh requirement without words of kindness, followed by the renewed promise—" And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, *because he is thy seed.*"

To mark the alacrity of obedience which the patriarch ever manifested when his cause was indicated by a clear command from God, we are told that " he rose up early in the morning " to set forward the bondwoman and her son upon their way. We are not told of the explanations and farewells which passed on this occasion; but it is preposterous to suppose there was anything harsh in this dismissal. We doubt not that Abraham's household knew that he was in the habit of receiving directions from God, by which his measures had been at all times directed; and that he had trained up all belonging to him into the habit of feeling that when such a direction had been received, nothing further remained to be considered. Abraham may or may not have told Hagar of Sarah's demand and her cause for it; but, questionless, he did tell her of the Divine command, of the necessity which it imposed upon him, and of the promise with which it was attended; and Hagar's own submission, on a former occasion, to a command from the same supreme authority, sufficiently intimates that she could not but feel the obligation of obedience under which her master lay. Furnished with a skin of water and with such provisions as travellers take with them, she departed with her son from the tents of her lord, and his father, and wandered in the desert of Beersheba. Here her supply of water was soon spent; and the young Ishmael, less inured than his mother to privations, grew faint from thirst and weariness, and seemed likely to perish in the deserts which were his promised heritage. There was no remedy but water; and water his mother saw none, and expected not to find there. The case was hopeless in her eyes. That the lad might not die in her sight, she laid him down under the shade of one of the desert shrubs, and withdrawing herself to some distance, she sat down upon the ground and wept aloud. The moans of the child and the cries of his mother were not unheard in heaven; and the pitying voice of the angel of God called to her, saying, " What aileth thee, Hagar? Fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the child where he is. Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thy hand; for I will make of him a great nation." The attention was thus guided to a distant well, to which she hastened to fill her vessel, and returned to give the lad drink. All was well with them then. They soon after met with a party of Bedouin pastors to whom they joined themselves, and remaining in the deserts, Ishmael soon distinguished himself by the expert use of the favourite weapon of that early age, the bow—" he became an archer," and acquired a character in conformity with that which the Divine predictions had assigned to him. In the East the mother usually takes all but the entire direction in the marriage of her son; and, agreeably to this usage, as soon as Ishmael became of proper age, Hagar procured a wife for Ishmael out of the land of Egypt, to which she herself belonged. We may now leave them and return to the tents of Abraham.

The special and marked interference of Providence to protect the sanctities of Abraham's tent made a profound impression on the king of Gerar; and this was not weakened when he noticed the growing power and wealth of the patriarch, and how all things prospered with him: and now, after several years, seeing that Abraham seemed disposed to remain in his country, he deemed it prudent to enter into a formal alliance of amity with him. Reverting to the recent expulsion of the Avim from this country by his own people, he was probably not without fear that the Hebrew clan might ultimately become powerful enough, and if so, might probably not want the inclination, to expel them in their turn. Hence, perhaps, the careful terms in which this, the first treaty on record, was couched. Abimelech, attended by Phichol, the chief captain of his host, proceeded to Abraham's camp, and thus addressed him:—" God is with thee in all that thou doest. Now, therefore, swear unto me here by God, that thou wilt not deal falsely *with me, nor with my son, nor with my son's son;* but according to the

kindness that I have done unto thee shalt thou do *unto me, and to the land wherein thou hast sojourned.*" The remarkable brevity of this first of treaties, while it is precise even to redundance, combined with its fine comprehensive character, renders it really inimitable. Its reliance upon the common sense and common honesty of men is also beautiful. It merely states the principle of an engagement—" thou wilt not deal falsely with me,"—and thus expresses a healthy and refreshing confidence that men would *interpret* rightly the particular acts in which false dealing might seem to be involved. Thus worthily does the first chapter in the history of human treaties open.

Abraham readily consented to enter into this engagement; but before doing so, took the opportunity of seeking of Abimelech an explanation and clear understanding on a matter of infinite concernment to himself, and by which his rights as a pastoral chief were very seriously affected. To dig a well is, unless under very peculiar circumstances, the most arduous and important work which a person in such situations undertakes: and the benefits of such a work are so highly appreciated, that the property of it becomes vested in the person by whom it was dug and in his heirs for ever.* While his clan are encamped near it, no parties not belonging to him can draw its waters without his leave. As we are getting into much mention of wells of water, it is desirable that this law on the subject should be clearly understood, as it tends to throw some light on subsequent transactions and disputes.

Now Abraham had dug a well near his encampment; and of the use of this the " servants " (probably the herdsmen) of Abimelech had violently deprived him. As men seldom act without some reason, or show of reason, which is deemed satisfactory to themselves, it may seem likely that Abimelech's people doubted the right of Abraham to apply the law of the desert to the common lands of an appropriated territory, and to claim the exclusive possession of the well he had dug in such land. If their view had been just, however, it could only have entitled them to a share of the water, and not have justified them in assuming that exclusive possession which they denied to the party at whose expense the benefit had been secured. But taking into account some transactions of rather later date, we incline to think that the cause of all the differences about wells which we read of in the history of Abraham and of Isaac, lay deeper than this account supposes, and must be sought in a country more similarly circumstanced than the open deserts to that in which the patriarch was at this time sojourning. The best analogy is offered by Persia. There all waste land—that is, all lands which are uncultivable from wanting the means of irrigation—are called " God's lands ;" and although the king is regarded as the general proprietor of the soil, such lands are free for any uses to which they can be applied; and whoever procures the means of irrigation, becomes the proprietor of the land which he thus renders cultivable. Now, as among the immemorially ancient usages of the East, none are more ancient than those which relate to the occupation of land, it is not too much to suppose that a similar usage to this existed in the time of Abraham ; and, if so, it is easy to conclude that the anxiety of the Philistines about the wells dug by Abraham arose from the apprehension that, by the formation of such wells, he would be understood to create a lien in the lands in which they lay, and would acquire an indefeasible right of occupation or rather of possession; and it might seem to them inconvenient that so powerful a clan should acquire such a right in the soil of so small a territory as that which belonged to them. Hence also their care, when Abraham afterwards left their part of the country, to fill up the wells which he had dug; and hence also the renewed and more bitter strife with Isaac when he, on arriving there, proceeded to clear out these wells and to dig new ones himself. That Isaac also pursued cultivation to some extent in the lands for which he had thus secured the means of irrigation, is a remarkable corroboration of the view we now take; as he certainly might in this way, but we know not how he could otherwise, acquire such a proprietary right as could alone entitle him to cultivate the soil.†

* That is, as long as it is kept in good condition. If it gets out of repair or choked up, and remains in this state for any length of time, the property in it is transferred to the tribe or person by whom it is restored to a serviceable condition.

† We are indebted for the principle of this explanation to the kindness of Sir John M'Neill, the present ambassador to the Persian Court. The suggestion was given too late to be made available in the notes to the corresponding portion of the 'Pictorial Bible.'

Abimelech, in reply to the complaint of Abraham respecting the well, declared that the conduct of his servants had not been sanctioned by him, and that, indeed, this was the first time he had heard anything of the matter ; and he made no objection to the proposal of Abraham, that the recognition of his (the patriarch's) right to the well should form a part of the proposed covenant. This proposal, thus represented as the sole matter for which Abraham himself took care to provide in a solemn engagement with the king of the Philistines, is, perhaps, as striking an indication of the supreme importance of water in those eastern countries as can anywhere be found. Both parties then swore to the covenant, the terms of which have thus been stated ; and as a memorial of the transaction, and in particular of his acknowledged right to the well, the patriarch gave to the place the name of Beer-sheba—*the Well of the Oath.* This imposition of commemorative names upon places was the principle of various methods which were resorted to in these earliest ages, to perpetuate the memory of events and contracts, in the absence of those written documents which were afterwards found more suitable for such purposes. We shall observe this often as we proceed.

The convenience of the situation to one having large possessions in cattle, together with the good understanding between him and the king, invited Abraham to remain many years at Beer-sheba ;* and contemplating, that, unless God otherwise determined, he should be likely to spend the remainder of his days in that place, he planted a grove of trees, and built under their shade an altar, at which he might with his household worship God. Such an oratory as this—the noblest and most beautiful of any—gives the first recorded instance of a place set apart for religious service. This, and most of the other patriarchal practices and ideas concerning trees, survived to a long subsequent age among the Druids of our own country ; and in their peculiar regard for the oak the Hebrew patriarchs went very far with them. Disregarding the abominations and corruptions which ultimately became connected with this and all other religious appropriations, let us acknowledge that when the fathers of the world sought for whatever was most noble and beautiful on earth, that they might connect it with their more fixed worship of God, and made choice of trees for that purpose, they decided under the full influence of the simpler, and—on account of their simplicity—the finer impulses of our nature. In the love of the patriarchs for trees, there is a feeling for something more than the gratefulness of their shade,—something which, in the view of many, gives to their character an understandable point by which a respect and sympathy is secured for them, which even their virtues might not win : for we know that none but a good man *can* truly love a tree, and none but a pure mind can remain open to that peculiar class of impressions which only the presence of a tree can make. (6)

The Jewish doctors count up ten trials of Abraham's faith and obedience.† Nine of these we have told. The tenth and last was of all these the most terrible, and from which, proportionably, the character of the patriarch came forth with the greater splendour—with the resplendence of gold refined in many fires. He had dwelt many years in Beersheba, and his son Isaac had reached the age of twenty-five years, when the astounding command came, that he was to immolate this son—the heir of the promises—as a sacrifice to Jehovah. It being the design of God to render the patriarch an eminent example to all his future posterity of unquestioning obedience, whereby he might worthily claim the title of "The Father of the Faithful," every circumstance was accumulated which seemed calculated to render obedience more difficult to him. Even in the requirement itself, the proposed victim is indicated by a variety of tender appellations, rising in their value by an admirable climax from the first to the last, every one of which must have entered like iron into the soul of the patriarch : "Take now *thy son*, thine *only son*, whom *thou lovest*, Isaac—and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I shall tell thee."

We do not imagine that the idea of a father sacrificing his son to God as a burnt-offering was new to Abraham. In after times we know it was but too common ; and it appears pro-

* He was there twenty-six years, according to the Jews.

† 1. In quitting his native country, Chaldea ; 2. his flight to Egypt from famine in Canaan ; 3. the first seizure of Sarah, in Egypt ; 4. the war for the rescue of Lot ; 5. his taking Hagar to gratify Sarah ; 6. his circumcision ; 7. the second seizure of Sarah in Gerar ; 8. the expulsion of Ishmael ; 9. the expulsion of Hagar ; 10. the sacrifice of Isaac. *Hales.*

bable that in those times which lie beyond the reach of our knowledge, the notion had crept in, that the life of a son, and especially of the eldest, the only, or of a very dear son, was the most valuable and precious offering in their power to present, it must needs be the most acceptable and meritorious in the eyes of the gods they worshipped. Hence, as the most sensible of the Jewish writers conjecture,* Abraham understood that this highest sacrifice by which, as he knew, the heathen manifested their zeal for their false gods, was required of him as a test of his zeal for the true God. But how he could reconcile such a command with the promise of a numerous posterity through this very Isaac might not appear very evident, did we not learn from the New Testament,† that so confident did he feel that this promise would and must be accomplished, that he believed that God would restore Isaac again to life after he was sacrificed. Curbing, therefore, the force of his paternal emotions, he, with the usual alacrity of his obedience, "rose early in the morning," and made the necessary preparations for the journey and for the sacrifice, directing the ass on which he usually rode to be saddled, and the wood required for a burnt-offering to be cleaved. He then departed with Isaac, attended by two of his young men. On the third day they arrived within a distant view of the place, which God had appointed for this awful act; and it proved to be that Mount Moriah on which, in after ages, the temple of Solomon was built; and this site was probably selected with a prospective reference to that circumstance, as well as to the mysteries of which the neighbourhood was to be the scene in ages to come.

Here, while the place was still some way off, Abraham alighted from his ass, and fearing lest the young men might be disposed to interfere, or, perhaps, apprehending that the act which he was about to execute might, through such witnesses, be drawn into a precedent, he directed them to remain there with the ass, while he and Isaac went yonder to worship. The father and son passed on in silence, Isaac bearing the wood which, unknown to him, was destined to consume his own body, and Abraham taking the knife and a vessel containing the fire with which the wood was to be kindled.(7) As they thus proceeded, it occurred to Isaac to ask the natural but, under the circumstances, very trying question,—"My father, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?" To this Abraham only answered, "God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering, my son." But as they proceeded, or when they arrived at the top of the hill, the patriarch must have explained to his son that he was himself the victim which God had provided; and that the pious and dutiful youth then bowed in submission to the will of God and the desire of his father, is evinced by the circumstances: for any act of compulsion was morally impossible by an old man of 125 years upon a vigorous youth of 25 years, whose strength is evinced by his ability to carry all the wood required for such a sacrifice; and his submission must have been founded on the conviction that his father was right in that which he was doing. The altar was built; the wood was disposed properly upon it; Isaac laid himself down upon the wood;‡ and lest the weakness of the flesh should shrink in this fiery trial, he submitted to be bound: and then the patriarch—with feelings which a fond father can understand without any description, and which none else would understand if described—lifted up his hand to smite the life which was doubtless far more precious to him than his own. The trial was complete. The uplifted arm was arrested, and the intense feelings of that solemn moment were calmed in an instant by a most welcome voice from heaven, which cried:—"Abraham! Abraham! lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: *for* NOW *I* KNOW *that thou fearest God, seeing that thou hast not withheld thy son—thy only son—from Me.*" And as the patriarch heard these words, his eyes fell upon a ram which had been caught in a thicket by its horns, and joyfully recognizing in this the victim which God *had provided* for a burnt-offering, he hastened to offer it on the altar in the place of his son Isaac; and never, surely, from the beginning of the world till now, was a religious act performed with such released feelings as those which attended this sacrifice. In memory of this event, and with a happy allusion to

* Philo, for instance. † Heb. xi. 19.

‡ In all sacrifice the victim was slain before being laid upon the altar: we are, therefore, convinced in our own minds that this fact furnishes another instance of Isaac's cheerful submission, and that to assist Abraham's intention as far as in his power, he disposed himself properly upon the altar, sparing his father what might have been an after difficulty.

his own ambiguous answer to the question of Isaac, as well as to its most unexpected accomplishment, he called the name of that place JAHOH JIREH,*—*the Lord will provide.*

This act of perfect obedience being consummated, it pleased God to reward the faith he had thus proved, and not found wanting, by the renewal of all his former promises, in terms so express and so strong, and confirmed by the highest of all possible sanctions—"By Myself I have sworn,"—that the patriarch could not but receive it as a firm and settled matter; and hence it does not appear that any further promise was made to him during the remainder of his life. Cheered by this promise, Abraham returned happily to Beersheba with his son, whom he had, as it were, received again from the dead, and who must now have become all the dearer to him, for the signal proof he had given of his pious resignation and filial piety.

After this twelve years passed away, during which we only know that Abraham received news from Mesopotamia, informing him that the family of his brother, Nahor, was in a flourishing condition, and that he had many children, and some grand-children. During this time, it appears, also, that Abraham removed his camp from Beersheba to his old station in the valley of Mamre, or at least to some place near Hebron. Here, at the end of the twelve years, Sarah died, at the age of 127 years; and it is remarkable that she is the only woman whose age, at the time of death, is mentioned in the Scripture. At this time, and probably from the time of her becoming a mother, Sarah occupied a separate tent from that of her husband.† And now, when her death was announced to him, he left his own tent, and sat down at the door of hers, "to weep for her," this being the mode of proceeding which custom required.

The death of Sarah raised a new question, which hitherto there had been no occasion to consider. It has been an ancient custom among the Bedouin tribes, not to bury their dead just where they happen to die, but to have a burial-place within their respective territories, to which they bring the bodies of such of the tribe as die within its district. In conformity with this custom, Abraham now wanted a suitable burial-ground, appropriated to the special use of his family, and in which the remains of all of that family who died in the land of Canaan might be laid. He therefore applied to the Hittites, dwelling in Hebron, to obtain the permanent grant of a piece of ground proper for this purpose. The account of the interview is curious and interesting, from the light it throws upon the position of Abraham and the manners of the time. The wealthy and powerful patriarch appears to have been popular with the Hittites, or was rather, perhaps, regarded by them as one whom it was their interest to oblige. He was received with great attention and respect, and when his wish was understood, the choice of all their sepulchres in which to bury his dead was readily and freely offered to him. On this the good patriarch rose up and bowed to the children of Heth, and then proceeded to explain more clearly the object he had in view. He wanted a family burial-place, for a permanent possession; and there was a field, called Machpelah, well planted with trees, and with a good cave at the end of it, which would exceedingly well answer his purpose, if the owner, one Ephron, then present, could be induced to sell this property to him. This person, without waiting to be pressed, readily, and with much tact, answered for himself:—"Nay, my lord, hear me: the field *give I thee*, and the cave that is therein. *I give it* thee; in the presence of the sons of my people [as witnesses] *give I it thee*: bury thy dead." Now this looks very fair; but the readiness of the man, the tone of the whole speech, with the parade of "give—give—give," so much reminds us of certain passages in our own Oriental experience, that Ephron and his speech find no favour in our eyes. We are convinced that, with all this apparent generosity, the man had a keen eye to his own interests, and saw clearly that it might be a more profit-

* Dr. Hales, whose view of this transaction we have much followed in the preceding paragraphs, considers that Jahoh is, probably, more nearly than Jehovah, the true reading of the awful name of God. How the true pronunciation was lost by the Jews, we have shown in a note at p. 49. "But," says Dr. Hales, "the true pronunciation had been fortunately preserved in several of the heathen classics, according to the pronunciation of those foreigners who had early intercourse with the Israelites and afterwards the Jews. Thus the Clusian Oracle (founded after the Trojan war), in answer to the inquiry, 'Which of the gods is he to be reckoned who is called ΙΑΩ?" uttered a remarkable response, preserved by Macrobius, of which this is part:—

Φραζεο τον παντων ὑπατον Θεον εμμεν ΙΑΩ.
Learn that the God supreme of all is JAO.'"

† This is shown by Gen. xxiv. 67.

able thing to lay the emir under an obligation, than to sell him the ground outright. Besides, if Abraham was, as seems to be the case, a much more important person than Ephron himself, he could not have received this land as a present, according to the usages of the East, without making a more considerable present in return. It seems to us that Abraham quite understood all this. He rose, and, after bowing generally to the congregation, addressed himself particularly to Ephron, and insisted on paying for the field with money; and this person, seeing him resolute, at last named the price. "It is worth four hundred shekels (weight) of silver;" but still, in exact conformity with the character we have assigned him, he takes care to add,—"What is that between me and thee?" As he had thus been brought to name a sum in the presence of so many witnesses, Abraham immediately weighed out the quantity of silver he required; and thus closed the bargain, with a degree of address, which shows that he was a judge of character, and knew how to deal with such persons as Ephron. The act of purchase included a specification of the property thus transferred, so precise and lawyer-like, as to make this primitive deed of conveyance a perfect model of its kind;* while it seems to intimate that the patriarch felt the necessity of precision in dealing with a person of Ephron's character. Thus was acquired the first possession of the Hebrew race in the land of Canaan—that possession a sepulchre.

There is not in the East any grief like the grief of a mother for her son, or of a son for his mother; and there were circumstances calculated to give peculiar intensity to the mutual attachment of Sarah and Isaac. The grief for the loss of his mother, acting upon the quiet and passive character of Isaac, must have been very strong; and it was probably the sense of privation and continued distress which he manifested, that put it into the mind of Abraham, about three years after Sarah's death, of providing a wife for his son, who was then about forty years of age. In meditating such an object, a Bedouin chief would naturally first think of keeping up the family connection, by seeking for his son a wife from the household of his brother; and, in fact, the young man is held to have the first claim to the hand of any female which the house of his uncle will supply. To the influence of such feelings was, in the case of Abraham, added an anxiety to keep pure and unmixed the race which God had chosen. This explains the strong interest which Abraham and the other patriarchs took in providing wives for their sons from among their own connections. On the present occasion, Abraham called his trusty old servant, Eliezer of Damascus, and made him take a solemn oath, to go to the family of his brother Nahor, in Mesopotamia, and bring thence a wife for Isaac, if one willing to come could be found there; giving him entire authority to conclude the marriage—which, in itself, is a remarkable illustration of the ideas on which Oriental marriages are usually concluded.

Eliezer departed with a train suitable to the importance of his mission, and calculated to impress a proper notion of his master's consequence upon those to whom he was going,—consisting of ten camels, with a proper proportion of attendants, and with valuable presents for the damsel and her friends; it being then, as now, the custom of the East to purchase the bride from her friends at a high price, as well as to make presents to herself, instead of the bride bringing a dowry to her husband.

It would seem that Nahor's family still lived in the town (Charran) where Abraham left it. Like Lot in Sodom, they lived in a house—and, so far, had relinquished the character of the pure pastoral nomades who dwell in tents, although the flocks were still sent out to distant pastures under the care of the younger branches of the family, and of shepherds, whose mode of life was like that of the Bedouins. Or, which is as likely, if not more so, the head establishment lived in a house only from the latter end of autumn to the spring, spending the rest of the year in tents—a practice which still prevails among some of the pastoral tribes of Western Asia.

How many days Eliezer's journey took we know not: but it was towards evening when he

* "The field of Ephron, which was in Machpelah, which was before Mamre, the field, and the cave which was therein, and all the trees that were in the field, that were in all the borders round about, were made sure unto Abraham for a possession, in the presence of the children of Heth, before all that went in at the gate of the city." Gen. xxiii. 17, 18.

arrived in the vicinity of his place of destination. His intimate acquaintance with Bedouin habits then suggested to him the measures which seemed best calculated to ensure the object of his journey. In that age, as now, the duty of drawing water from the wells devolved upon the young women of every Bedouin household; and the sheikh's own daughter is not above taking her share in a service which is not by any means considered degrading,—so much otherwise, indeed, that the young women find much enjoyment in meeting at the well, and talking together of their small affairs. When Eliezer reached the well, the time of the evening had nearly arrived at which the females are wont to come forth to draw water; and he knew that among them he might expect to see the destined bride of his young master. He therefore allowed his camels to kneel down, in their usual posture of rest, resolving to remain there, as one who tarried for leave to give water to them from that well. While thus waiting, he prayed to the God of his master Abraham to give him good speed that day; and, being deeply impressed with the responsibility of the duty he had undertaken, he ventured to propose a sign whereby the kindness of her disposition should be made to indicate the female appointed to be the wife of Isaac. He was yet speaking, when the young women came to discharge their evening duty. To one of them his attention was particularly drawn, by her great beauty; and as she was returning from the well, with her pitcher on her shoulder, he ran to meet her, with the request that she would allow him to take a draught of water from her vessel. She said, "Drink, my lord;" and, with the utmost alacrity, lowered her pitcher from her shoulder to her hand,



[Girl giving drink to a thirsty Traveller.]

to give him drink. When he had finished, she hastened again and again to the well, emptying her pitcher into the trough, to give the camels water; while the admiring stranger pondered in his mind whether this, being the sign he had required, did not sufficiently indicate the future bride of his master's son. To assist his conclusions, he took from his treasures a nose-jewel and a pair of bracelets, both of gold, and presented to her, asking, at the same time, whose daughter she was, and whether her father's house afforded room where his party might lodge. To his great joy, her answer proved her to be the very woman of whom Abraham had already heard in Canaan—namely, Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel, one of the sons of Nahor. She also told him, not only that there was room for his party, but also chopped straw and corn for the camels. The good old servant now convinced that he had found the right person, bowed his head, and blessed, aloud, the God of Abraham, who had thus led him to the house of his master's brethren. No sooner had these words fallen from him, than Rebekah ran home to tell all this to her friends.

At this time Nahor does not seem to have been alive—at least his name does not appear

in any part of this transaction; and although Bethuel, the father of Rebekah, still lived,* the management of all affairs appears to have fallen into the hands of his son—the keen and active Laban,—who no sooner caught the meaning of his sister's hurried statement, and saw (as the narrative is careful to add) the valuable presents which had been given to her, than he hurried forth, and warmly invited Eliezer into the house. There, with the usual promptitude of Eastern hospitality, a meal was ready for him and his companions by the time they had attended to their camels and washed their feet. But the faithful servant was too much interested in the result of his mission to sit down and eat before he had declared his errand. This he did in a precise and simple narrative of what has already been related,—in which, however, he, with much address, was mindful to let his audience know of Abraham's great wealth, and of the prosperity with which he had been favoured. So Laban, in his own name, and that of Bethuel, declared that the visible traces of Divine direction in this matter left them without an answer; and then, without taking the trouble to consult Rebekah, added,—"Behold, Rebekah is before thee; take her and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord hath spoken." On this the overjoyed steward bowed his head in thanks to God. Then he drew from his store of precious things, ornaments of gold and silver, and costly garments, and gave them to the elected bride; and also to her brother and mother he made the valuable presents which they were entitled to expect. The next morning Eliezer rose early, and, rather unexpectedly, required permission to return to his master with the bride. They wished him to tarry a few days; but as he persisted, and Rebekah professed her willingness to go at once, no further opposition was made.

Women in the East consume but little time in preparing for even an extensive journey; and Rebekah being soon ready, was dismissed by Laban with the very characteristic Oriental



[Women on Camels.]

blessing,—"Be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them." The nurse is a very respectable and influential personage in an

* Josephus says he was dead; and some other writers follow him, being evidently unable to reconcile the prominent part taken by Laban with the supposition that his father was present. But as the sacred text intimates that a Bethuel was actually there, and as no instance occurs in all Scripture of a son bearing the same name as his father, we prefer to think that the father was himself alive, and either from imbecility, or some other cause, had relinquished his share in the activities of life to his sharp and energetic son.

Eastern household, and often accompanies the young female she has nourished to the new home which marriage gives her, and where she becomes her chief adviser and confidant.* So now, Rebekah's nurse and some of her damsels were sent with her. They were mounted on camels, and departed, Eliezer and his men leading the way.

It was eventide when the party arrived in the neighbourhood of Abraham's camp; and the contemplative Isaac had walked forth into the fields to meditate, and was the first to discover the advancing camels. He walked on to meet them; and his destined bride observing him approach, asked Eliezer who he was; and hearing the answer,—" It is my master,"— she dismounted from her camel, and enveloped herself in the veil of a bride,—by which Isaac might distinguish her from the others, and would know that the mission of his servant had not been unavailing. Having learnt from Eliezer all that had taken place, Isaac took Rebekah to the tent of his mother, Sarah, which belonged to her as the chief woman of the tribe. He loved her, and she became his wife. Then, first, he began to feel comfort since his mother's death.

All the circumstances of this expedition are, like others in the patriarchal history, eminently illustrative of the condition of life to which they belong; and they abound with such strong and finely-discriminated traits of character and natural feeling, that the writer who wishes to leave upon the mind of the reader distinct and characteristic impressions of the ages and the conditions of life through which his history leads, may well be reluctant to submit the details which lie before him to the curtailment and condensation which his limitations may require.

Soon after Isaac's marriage, Abraham, remembering that he was to be "the father of *many* nations," took to himself a second wife, Keturah, who was probably one, perhaps the chief, of the handmaids who had been "born in his house, or bought with his money." By her he had six sons, Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah; all of whom before his own death, thirty-seven years after, he sent with suitable allowances into the country east and south-east of the Promised Land, where they became the founders of Arabian tribes, some of which are often noticed in the Jewish annals, and some remaining traces of whose names may to this day be discovered in Arabia. Thus Abraham disposed of his sons by Keturah in his own lifetime, lest at his death they should be disposed to interfere with the superior claims of Isaac, and, probably, lest any of them should settle in the land of Canaan, which was that son's destined heritage.

While thus Abraham was becoming the father of many nations, the beautiful wife of Isaac proved to be barren. "Of all the patriarchs," says Bishop Hall, "none made so little noise in the world as Isaac; none lived either so privately or so innocently: neither know I whether he approved himself a better son or a husband; for the one, he gave himself over to the knife of his father, and mourned three years for his mother; for the other, he sought not to any handmaid's bed, but in a chaste forbearance reserved himself for twenty years' space and prayed. Rebekah was so long barren." † After this she conceived, and brought forth twins, whose fortunes were predicted before their birth; for their struggles, as if for superiority, in her womb, engaged her attention, and she entreated God to show her what this might mean. The answer was, that two nations, two manners of people, were in her womb; and that of these the one people should be stronger than the other, and the elder should serve the younger. When they came into the world, the first-born exhibited a very hairy appearance, on which account the name of Esau [*hairy*] was given to him;‡ the other had hold of his brother's heel in the birth, and received the name of Jacob [*heel*] from that circumstance. Characteristic instances, these, of the manner in which, as now, among the Bedouin tribes, names were imposed upon children with reference to any unusual appearance they exhibited, or any little incident that occurred at the time of their birth.

* This is the more frequently the case when the husband's abode is distant from that of the bride's parents. From her influence, often misdirected, over the young woman's mind, the nurse is seldom in much favour with the husband.

† 'Contemplations.' Book iii. cant. 1.

‡ The name *Esau* is most generally applied to him personally; but his descendants are always invariably called *Edomites*, from his other name.

Nothing further is recorded of Abraham till he died,* at the age of 175 years, " an old man and full of years." His body was deposited beside that of Sarah in the cave of Machpelah, which he had bought of Ephron the Hittite ; and it is very interesting to note that the wild son of Hagar united amicably with the placid Isaac in rendering the last of duties to their common father; and as the act of burial in the East very speedily follows death, this leaves us to infer that Ishmael had been summoned from the desert to receive the dying blessing of the patriarch.

As this is the last occasion in which Ishmael is personally produced by the sacred historian, he takes the opportunity of stating as much of his further history as the objects of his narrative required. It amounts to this, that the son of Hagar was the father of twelve sons,† who were the founders of as many tribes, which took their names, and which abode in the northern parts of Arabia, and on the borders of Egypt, Syria, and the Euphrates. That these tribes did not *all* take to the nomade life, and dwell in tents, appears from the mention of their " towns and castles." Ishmael himself died, at the age of 137, " in presence of all his brethren." The Jewish writers have claimed for him the distinction of being the founder of the Arabian nation. But there were Arabians before Ishmael; and the amount of his claim is doubtless that which the Scripture allows him—that he was the father of twelve Arabian tribes, and forms but one of the chief stocks from which the Arabian nation is descended.(8)

Esau and Jacob were fifteen years of age when their grandfather Abraham died.‡ As the lads grew up, they manifested characters as different as those of Ishmael and Isaac had been. Esau was the Ishmael of this generation, but Jacob was not the Isaac. Esau cared little for the more quiet and inactive duties of pastoral life, but he was abroad in the open country, where his careless and impulsive character found a congenial, because active and excitable, employment in hunting and shooting down with his arrows the gazelles and other wild animals which that region offered.§ Jacob, on the other hand, was a plain and quiet man, not taking any interest in such hunting excursions as those of his brother, but remaining for the most part at home among the tents, and acquiring much knowledge of the shepherd's unostentatious and humble duties. The character of Esau, rather than that of Jacob, is the one in which a Bedouin father is most likely to take pride; and hence it is no wonder that Isaac had much more regard for Esau than for his brother, the more, perhaps, as the former was enabled to show his father frequent and acceptable marks of his affection and respect by bringing for his eating the more choice game that he had killed. Isaac was also willing to regard his first-born as the heir of the promises; for although we see no reason to agree with those who think that Rebekah did or could conceal from him the communication concerning them which she had received from God before their birth, yet that communication, as interpreted with the bias of his affection for Esau, might not seem to him very clearly to establish the divine intention to assign to his youngest son the same preference which he had himself obtained over Ishmael. But this intention seemed very clear to Rebekah herself, who interpreted the Lord's answer to her by the light of her own affection for Jacob. He was *her* favourite. She proved a somewhat crafty and unscrupulous woman, and Jacob's natural disposition, till he got advanced in years, lay rather in the same direction ; and besides this bond of sympathy between them, his more gentle and congenial character, together with his being more constantly at home, naturally recommended him to a higher place in his mother's affection than that which the more boisterous and careless Esau occupied. Jacob knew from his mother the superior destiny which

* B. C. 1978.

† Nebajoth, Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsham, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadar, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. Of the tribes descended from them, which took their names, the two first are those which oftenest occur in the Scripture, and that probably from their being situated nearest to Palestine. The tribe descended from Nebajoth are the Nabathæan Arabs of classical history. All the tribes descended from Ishmael are called collectively Ishmaelites and Hagarenes in Scripture.

‡ The book of Genesis puts the death of Abraham before the birth of his grandsons. But the order of circumstances in that book is not always chronological; and by comparing ages, it becomes certain that the birth of Esau and Jacob took place several years before Abraham's death.

§ Esau evidently hunted on foot; and even the gazelle, proverbial for its swiftness, may be hunted on foot. For that animal cannot long sustain the rapidity with which it commences its flight. Man can run much longer than the gazelle can flee with speed; so that although the utmost exertion of his speed is much inferior to that of the gazelle, an Arab lad will often succeed, indeed seldom fails, by perseverance, in running down that fine creature.

awaited him; and, at her suggestion, kept himself on the watch for an opportunity of getting from Esau a formal transfer or relinquishment of the higher natural claims which he might be supposed to derive from the accident of a few minutes' earlier birth. Such an opportunity was not long wanting.

Jacob was one day preparing a savoury pottage of lentiles, which, or the mode of preparing which, was a novelty in that part of the country, having been lately introduced from Egypt.* While he was thus occupied, Esau came in from a severe day's hunting, famishing with hunger, and faint from fatigue. Under such circumstances the coarsest fare would have seemed pleasing to him; but the savoury smell and tempting reddish appearance of the pottage was absolutely enchanting. The uncivilised or semi-civilised man is a child in his appetites at all times; and the hunger of such a man is a madness (9). Jacob was too sharp a youth not to know this, and he did not over-estimate the importance of his pottage when, on Esau's begging passionately for a share of "that red—that red" † (not knowing its name), he demanded his birthright as the price of the indulgence. We incline to think that he had before been teased on this point, at less favourable moments, and had resisted; but now he was in the state of one who would deem all prospective benefits and privileges cheap, in comparison with the present good of a cup of cold water. He therefore exclaimed fretfully,—"Behold, I am at the point to die, and what good will *this birthright* do me?" Seeing his brother so ready to take the bait, Jacob was not content with a mere off-hand agreement, but to make the bargain secure would not part with his pottage, till it was confirmed by oath, Esau then got his mess; and surely "there was never any meat, except the forbidden fruit, bought so dear as this broth of Jacob." ‡

This transaction has raised much inquiry concerning the nature of those privileges—the birthright—which Jacob coveted so highly, and which Esau so lightly bartered away. Taking the question generally, the privilege of the first-born seems to have been that he became the acknowledged chief or head of the tribe or clan, and in that character (but some dispute this) was its authorised priest and sacrificer, and that he had a title to the first consideration in the last blessing of the father, and to a portion of the inheritance twice as large as that which any of the other sons received. So much generally; but in the particular instance, there were other privileges which were then supposed to be annexed to primogeniture, but which did not ultimately prove to be so: these were, the promised Divine care and blessing on the chosen race, the inheritance of the land of Canaan, and the instrumentality of bringing a blessing upon all the families of the earth. Now the question is, whether it was the temporal or spiritual heritage, or both, the transfer of which Jacob obtained from his brother, and this is a question beset with considerable difficulties. Upon the whole we are inclined to free Jacob and his mother from the suspicion of mercenary motives, and to consider that they regarded only the spiritual heritage —the heirship of the promises—as being intended for Jacob; and that of this only they wished Esau to relinquish any claim which he might be supposed to derive from the priority of his birth. We can easily understand how such a man as Esau might "despise" *this* birthright, and ask contemptuously what good it would do him; but even he was probably not insensible to the benefit of a double share in Isaac's rich possessions. The reasons on which this conclusion is founded cannot be stated in this place, as they in some measure anticipate the historical narrative; but a note at the end of this chapter contains some further observations on the subject. (10)

About this time, or soon after, there was a famine in the land of Canaan; and Isaac appears

* We obtain this conclusion from the circumstance that the mess was manifestly strange to Esau, and, by reason of that strangeness, appeared to him the greater delicacy,—compared with the fact on which Austin founds his conclusion that they were Egyptian lentiles, namely, that Egypt was famous for the lentile, and the preparation of it. It had two sorts, one darker than the other, and both greatly prized by the ancients. And how common and favourite a dish lentile pottage was, appears from the ancient paintings of that country, which represent persons engaged in preparing it over a fire. In these, the preparation is represented as being made in a pot, which rests upon a metal stand or tripod; the fire burns on the ground, and the cook stirs the pot with a stick as it boils. August. in Ps. xlvi.; Plin. Hist. Nat. l. xviii. c. 31; Wilkinson, vol. ii. No. 277, fig. 9.

† Hence he got for a name the word he had used, *Edom* (red). But although we are told this, his proper name of Esau is that which he usually bears when mentioned personally; but his posterity are always called Edomites.

‡ Bishop Hall.

to have had some thought of going down into Egypt, as his father had done before. But the Lord appeared to him, and forbade him to go thither, or to leave the country which, for Abraham's sake, had become the destined heritage of his seed; and, on this occasion, all the promises made to his father were renewed to him in terms very full and distinct. He then went to Gerar, where another Abimelech than he who made the covenant with Abraham reigned, and another Phichol was captain of the host. These were evidently not proper names, but the official titles which the kings and military commanders of the Philistines bore. While Isaac tarried here, an adventure occurred remarkably similar to that which his father had met with in the same place, in consequence of his denial that Sarah was his wife. Indeed, the circumstances which happened to Abraham in Egypt, to the same person in Gerar, and to Isaac also in that place, have so much resemblance, and are, in themselves, so unlikely to have occurred to the same persons, that were one authorized to judge the book of Genesis by the common rules of historical criticism, he might be inclined to think that the compiler of the book, having before him three different accounts of the same transaction, was led, from the differing circumstances which he found in them, to consider that the statements referred to three different transactions instead of one. As, however, this explanation is not admissible, we proceed to observe that although Isaac, like his father before him, gave out that his wife was his sister, she was not taken from him, nor was he molested on her account; but when the king accidentally discovered that Rebekah was really Isaac's wife, he sent for him and charged him with this disguise. He made just the same excuse as his father; and the king, after pointing out the danger which might have ensued, gave strict charge to his people, declaring that "he that toucheth this man or his wife shall surely be put to death,"—a rather superfluous injunction, *we* should think, but, in fact, curiously illustrative of the ideas of the Orientals and their attitude towards foreigners. This also will be noted as the first instance in history of a king holding the power of life and death.

Isaac remained a long time in this neighbourhood; and, after a while, he began to pay some attention to agriculture, being probably induced thereto by some existing scarcity, or the apprehension of one approaching, and the virgin soil rewarded him that same year a hundred-fold. The principle on which he might cultivate the soil in the Philistine territory has been explained in a lately preceding page; and the manner after which the soil is actually cultivated in some parts of Western Asia by tribes of nomade pastors, will in another place be elucidated. (11) Here, in every way, Isaac prospered very greatly,—or, in the cumulative language of Scripture, "The Lord blessed him: and the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew, till he became very great; for he had possessions of flocks, and possessions of herds, and great store of servants." * This great prosperity excited the envy of the Philistines, and they were especially jealous of his operations in husbandry, for the reasons which we have lately had occasion to state. They therefore hastened to fill up with earth the wells which had been dug by his father, and on which Isaac's own claim to conduct such operations rested; and, to crown all, the king himself desired the patriarch to remove himself to a greater distance, as his people could not bear to see a stranger thriving better than themselves upon their own soil.

For the sake of peace, Isaac accordingly departed, and naturally thought of resorting to the wells which Abraham had digged in the remoter parts of that territory. He found that these had already been filled up by the Philistines after the death of Abraham, and he proceeded to clear them out, and to restore to them the names by which his father had called them. He does not appear to have been interfered with in these operations. But when he proceeded to dig new wells the case was changed. His people, digging in the valley of Gerar, found a fine spring of water, and proceeded to form a well; but a warm dispute arose about it between his shepherds and those of Abimelech, the latter declaring the water to be theirs: on which Isaac, ever disposed to peace, gave it up to them, after imposing upon it the opprobrious name of Ezek [*contention*]. Proceeding farther, he dug another well: but about this the same strifes arose with the same result; and the patriarch left upon this well the name of Sitnah [*hatred*]. About the next and remoter well which his people digged there was no strife, and he gave it the

* Gen. xxvi. 12—14.

name of Rehoboth [*room*]: " For now," said he, " the Lord hath made *room* for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land." Having thus provided a well—for his cattle were sent to pasture in this district—he removed his head-quarters to Beersheba, where he had himself been born, and which was, in his later years, the favourite station of his father.(12)

On the night of his arrival at that old and honoured station, the Lord appeared to him in a dream, or vision, and conveyed to him the highest possible comfort and encouragement in the words, " Fear not, FOR *I am with thee*;" and then renewed his promise to him—to bless him, and to multiply his seed for Abraham's sake. Then Isaac built an altar there, and worshipped the Lord; and his purpose being confirmed to remain for some time among the scenes of his boyhood, he proceeded to establish his camp, and to dig a well—or, more probably, to clear out that which his father had digged there.

Abimelech reflected that Isaac had not been very kindly treated by himself, and that his conduct had encouraged the harshness of his servants, by which the patriarch had been obliged to make this more distant removal; and, apprehending that he might harbour feelings of resentment on this account, he determined to go to him and renew the covenant of peace which their fathers had made. So he went, accompanied by Ahuzzath, his friend, and by Phichol, the commander of his forces. Isaac, to make them feel that he was sensible of the injuries he had received, gave them but a cool reception; but, nevertheless, entertained them handsomely, and, on the following day, consented to enter into the desired covenant. This matter was just concluded, when Isaac's men brought him word that they had reached the spring in the well which they were clearing out, on which he significantly bestowed upon it the name, the Well of the Oath [Beersheba], which his father had given it, on nearly a similar occasion, a hundred years before. Indeed, it is astonishing how similar, almost to identity, the history of Abraham's dealings with the Philistines is to the account of Isaac's intercourse with the same people.

Being now on the borders of the Hittites, into whose districts Esau's huntings often led him, Esau soon formed such connections as led to his marriage with two women of that nation, Judith and Bashemath, by name. He was then forty years of age, which, as already remarked, seems to have been the established age of manhood until the time of Moses.* This proceeding was a great grief of mind to his father and mother, who were, as usual, very anxious that their sons should strengthen the family ties, and keep the race unmixed, by marriages in their own family. Their feelings in this matter became one of the natural instrumentalities whereby God effected his purpose of keeping the chosen race apart and separate; and, doubtless, formed one of the reasons, so to speak, why a Bedouin family, in which such feelings are always strong, was in the first instance selected for this great object.

Esau, however, did not separate himself from his parents; and he still retained the chief place in the affections of his father, who continued to regard him as the heir of the promises. He was probably unacquainted with the sale of the birthright, which was a transaction too little to the credit of any of the parties concerned to make them anxious to tell him of it; or, if he did know it, he may have regarded it as a mere youthful trick—the effect of fatigue and hunger, to which no importance was to be attached. When, therefore, at the age of 137 years, Isaac's eyesight had failed, and other infirmities of age had grown upon him, he imagined that the day of his death could not be far distant, and prepared to confer upon his first-born, in a formal blessing, that full inheritance of the promises made to Abraham, which he desired him to possess, and which he unadvisedly deemed himself qualified to bestow. As this matter involves some points of difficulty, a little explanation may not be unacceptable to the reader.

As these were not days of written documents, it appears to have been the custom for fathers, when they found their last days approaching, to assemble their sons, and bless them, or, in other words, deliver an oral WILL, in which, mixed with matter of retrospect or anticipation, each was told what he was to do and to inherit. In the family of Abraham, quite a new and interesting application of this custom arose, since the heritage comprehended objects over which the father had no control, and benefits which he did not himself possess, and could not, as of himself, bequeath to others. Therefore the patriarchs could not properly, on their own authority, declare the appropriation of the blessings promised or bestowed in the covenant made with Abra-

* Compare Exod. ii. 11, Acts vii. 23.

ham; though, if they had so chosen, they might probably, on their own responsibility, have declared whatever appropriations they deemed fitting of the actual property—the flocks and herds, the silver and the gold—which they then possessed. For this reason—to anticipate the history a little—Jacob himself, in his old age, appears to have disposed of his actual property in the usual way; but no notice is taken of it in Scripture, which is, however, very particular to tell us how, before his death, he assembled his twelve sons to declare to them what God had shown him, respecting the distribution among them of the heritage of promise.

Now, to return, Abraham is not recorded to have performed any such act of blessing; and the reason is plain,—he provided for all his sons in his own lifetime, and had nothing further to say to them concerning the property remaining with him, and which belonged to Isaac. And then, as to the heirship of the promises, there was nothing whatever for him to declare on that point, and the divine will had repeatedly declared its appropriation to Sarah's son. But, in the present instance, the case was different. Isaac had two sons; the claim of the eldest of whom to the secular heirship was unquestionable; which of them might inherit the promises of the covenant was less certain: but, in the absence of any positive direction, Isaac might infer that in this case, and thenceforth, it was to follow the course of nature, and form a part of the brilliant heritage of the first-born. He appears to have made this inference, and to have concluded himself authorised, without any special direction from God, to deal with the whole heritage under that impression. If his partialities had led him to prefer Jacob, he would have hesitated to alter, on his own authority, what was considered the course of nature; but in regarding his favourite Esau as the heir of the covenant, there seemed no responsibility of alteration, but only the confirmation of that which nature appeared to have appointed, and which God had not seemed to him to set aside.

On whatever views Isaac proceeded, he certainly acted on his own authority when he said to Esau,—" Take thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me some venison; and make me savoury meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat, that my soul may bless thee before I die." This did not escape the ears of Rebekah, who, finding that her husband was at last about to bestow on Esau what she herself considered the due of Isaac, immediately, with the ready ingenuity peculiar to her sex, thought of a device whereby this plan might be frustrated, and the important blessing diverted to the son she better loved. She proposed this plan to Jacob; but even he was startled at its boldness, and urged some objections; but as these were not objections of principle, and only arose from fear of the consequences of detection, they were easily removed by his mother, who was very willing to take all the consequences on herself, and he then submitted to her direction. He went and fetched two good kids from the flocks, with which Rebekah hastened to prepare savoury meat, such as Isaac loved. She then produced a dress belonging to Esau, for Jacob to put on; and when he was clad, fastened about his hands the skins of the goats, to imitate the hairiness of Esau; and then she gave him the savoury mess, with bread, to take to the blind old man. This was a deservedly anxious moment to both Jacob and his mother; for they had two fears,—one, lest Isaac should detect the imposture, and the other, lest Esau should return before all was over. But all took effect according to their wish: for although some probable doubt about the fitness of his own course made Isaac guarded and suspicious; and although his ear, sharpened by blindness, enabled him to detect the difference of the voice, and the quickness of the assumed Esau's return excited his surprise, the feel and fresh smell of the dress which Jacob wore, and the hairiness of his hands, lulled his doubts, and he received the savoury mess which the deceiver brought, and afterwards drank the wine which he offered. Then he said, " Come near, now, and kiss me, my son;" and when Jacob went near to kiss him, he said, " See, the smell of my son is the smell of a field which Jehovah hath blessed: therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine: let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren; and *let thy mother's sons* bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be every one that blesseth thee." There can, we imagine, be no doubt that Isaac *intended* thus to convey to Esau the blessings of God's covenant with Abraham: but from the want of precision in the terms which he employs, it may be questioned if he well understood what those

blessings really were. Nor would this be much marvel; for, if the truth must be told, Isaac appears to have been rather a weak and rather an obtuse person: nor had his mind been enlarged by much intercourse with God; for Jehovah, who had appeared often to his father, and did hereafter appear many times to his own son, manifested his presence to *him* only twice. The clause, "be lord over thy brethren," may seem to indicate his knowledge of the intimation which had been made to Rebekah before the birth of her sons,—"the elder shall serve the younger,"—and to be designedly in counteraction of the impression which it had made. The expression, "Let *thy mother's sons* bow down to thee," has also a very invidious look, and seems as if levelled, with no good will, at Jacob, the mother's favourite.

The design having thus succeeded, Jacob left his father; and he had scarcely departed when Esau returned from his hunting, and, with the game he had killed, prepared such savoury meat as his father loved, and bare it to him. We may imagine the consternation of Isaac when the well-known voice of his beloved son exclaimed, "Let my father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me." He trembled very exceedingly, and said, "Who?—where is he who hath taken venison and brought it to me, and I have eaten of all before thou comest, and have blessed him,—*yea, and he shall be blessed.*" The turn in this last clause is very remarkable, and seems to intimate that the patriarch received a sudden conviction, which he had half suspected from the first, but had been unwilling to entertain, that Jacob was the heir of the promises. Whether this conviction was the result of some sudden act of mind, or that inspiration and direction from above, acting upon his mind, for which he ought, in the first instance, to have waited before he undertook to assign the heirship of the covenant, may appear doubtful to many; but the latter seems the more probable alternative, as it is manifest that presently after he spoke of what he did not *previously* know, and of what he could not possibly know but through the spirit of prophecy.

The impetuous Esau was aghast at this intimation; he cried, with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said to his father, "Bless me, even me, also, O my father!" To which Isaac could only reply by reminding him that his brother had come with subtilty, and taken the blessing intended for him. This called to Esau's mind his earlier wrong; and adverting to the double meaning of his name,* he said, "Is he not rightly named *Jacob?* for he hath *supplanted* me these two times;" but again he returned to the single point in which his hope lay, and exclaimed, "Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?" This must have reminded Isaac, perhaps with some compunction, that in blessing, as he supposed, his first-born, he had not, intentionally, kept in view any blessing for his youngest son. Now, convinced of an overruling control which precluded him from recalling the blessing he had unknowingly given to Jacob, he answered, "Behold, I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants, and with corn and wine have I sustained him: and what shall I now do unto thee, my son?" But Esau, fairly overpowered, and incapable of taking in any but one broad idea, persisted in his right to an equivalent blessing, if not exactly the one intended for him,—"Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, even me, also, O my father! And Esau lifted up his voice and wept." The blind old man must have been deeply tried not only in witnessing this affliction of his son, but to feel that his wishes and hopes for him had been brought to nothing. But then, or just before, he received such a clear impression or vision as to his son's future lot as enabled him to gratify his wish. "Behold, thy dwelling shall be remote from the fatness of the earth, and from the dew of heaven;† by thy sword ‡ shalt thou live, and thou shalt serve thy brother: but the time will come when thou shalt prevail, and shalt break his yoke from off thy neck." We shall see the fulfilment of this in due season.§

* *Jacob* means *a supplanter*, as well as *a heel*.

† This is the reverse of our current version; and while the text allows this interpretation, it is best to adopt it, as otherwise the same blessing is thus far given to Esau as to Jacob, while, in fact, it was not true that the posterity of Edom possessed a territory that can well be considered fertile. This is the interpretation of Houbigant, Le Clerc, Castilio, De Vence, Purver, Boothroyd, and others.

‡ We agree with those who think that "on thy own desert" is a better translation than "by thy sword," of על חרבך; but although this translation is more in unison with the version of the first clause which we have adopted, still, as it has no historical bearing, we shall not needlessly interfere with our generally excellent public version.

§ The subjection of the Edomites to the Israelites did not take place till the time of David; and their foretold deliverance occurred in the time of Jehoram, when they revolted from the kings of Judah, and were able to maintain their independence.

All the parties were more or less to blame in this curious transaction. Isaac, for acting without due authority, and, as indicated by his conduct, with doubt that he was doing right. Even Esau cannot claim much of our sympathy in his too late clamour for a benefit which he had so childishly and lightly bartered away; and as to Jacob and his mother, if they had supposed the blessing due to Esau, their plots to deprive him of it would have been crimes of a deep dye; but as they believed the youngest son to be by the appointment of God the heir of the promises, they had better have left Him to effect his own purposes in his own way and his own time, without seeking to promote his objects by such paltry and needless devices. Jacob's craft, his lies, and his heartless impositions will always bear a very bad look; and his conduct leaves such an impression upon our minds, that it takes a long while before we get reconciled to him; and it is not till after he has passed the river Jordan, on his return from Mesopotamia, that he obtains our respect. These *clever* operations proceeded on the principle of doing wrong to prevent wrong, or to obtain good.

Isaac was too much humbled by the consciousness of his own share in the wrong-doing, and by the certainty he now possessed that Jacob was the real heir of the blessing he had obtained, to harbour any resentment, or to make any complaints; on the contrary, while Esau was still the beloved of his heart, he began from henceforth to take unusual interest about one whom he now recognised as the peculiar object of the divine favour. But as for Esau, his resentment was fierce and deep, and only to be appeased by blood. He knew that all the blessings promised to Abraham must descend in the line of Isaac, who had no sons but himself and Jacob; and, therefore, while in slaying his crafty brother he would gratify the hatred he now felt towards him, he inferred that he should by the same act become the heir of all. Him, therefore, he determined to destroy; but out of regard to his father, whom he sincerely loved, he determined not to execute his purpose while he lived,—the rather that his end seemed then, to himself and others, to be at no great distance,—though he actually lived above forty years after these trying events.

The blunt and open character of Esau disqualified him from keeping his own secret. His intention transpired, and was reported to Rebekah; who was seriously alarmed, and proposed to Jacob that he should proceed, secretly, to her brother Laban, in Mesopotamia, and remain with him a little while till Esau's resentment should subside. On this the safety, not of one only, but both her sons, seemed to her to depend. For although we do not learn of any judicial tribunals which could have undertaken to punish Esau for the act of murder he contemplated, there is no doubt that he would have been amenable to the fatal and resistless operation of the law of *Thâr*, or blood-avenging, which existed from the most early ages, and which still, by its action upon the fears of the wild tribes of the desert, and indeed of all the less civilised tribes of western Asia, from the shores of the Red Sea to the Caucasian mountains, keeps in check their fiercer passions, and makes them backward to shed blood. By this law the nearest relative of the slain party is bound to pursue the slayer, and to rest not—never to let his purpose sleep—till he has exacted life for life and blood for blood. In the present case, if Esau had effected his intention, after the death of his father, the duty of the goël, or blood-avenger, Jacob having no children of his own, would have devolved upon the eldest son of Ishmael—that brother of Isaac having, at this time, himself been dead several years; and that this duty would be inexorably executed, the purely Bedouin habits of the Ishmaelite race must have rendered unquestionable. Hence the anxiety of Rebekah lest she should lose both her sons in one day, for at the least, Esau must have taken to flight—must have become a fugitive and a vagabond, like Cain, the instant he slew his brother.

In proposing the plan of Jacob's journey to Mesopotamia to Isaac, his wife thought it right to spare him this new trouble; and therefore she merely stated what was doubtless one of the reasons which made the journey the more desirable in her eyes, though it was not the only one or the principal. She reminded him of the marriage of Esau to the daughters of Canaanites, and what a serious calamity it would be if Jacob, now the recognised heir of the promises, should be led to follow his brother's example. As his shrewd wife suspected, Isaac caught at this, and himself proposed the very plan she had herself arranged. He sent for Jacob, and charged him not to take a wife from among the Canaanites, but to proceed to Padan-Aram

[Mesopotamia], and there seek a wife among his cousins, the daughters of Laban, his mother's brother. He ended with the broad and cheerful recognition of Jacob as the heir of the promises, and blessing him as such.

When Abraham sent his servant the same journey to get a wife for his son Isaac, there were ten camels, and servants, and precious things; but now the son himself sets forth, alone and on foot, with no other equipment than the staff which he carried in his hand. The secrecy which the resentment of Esau rendered necessary accounts sufficiently for the difference.

Esau, who was probably absent on one of his huntings when Jacob departed, learnt in due time, probably from his father, where and on what errand his brother was gone; and seeing from this how distasteful his own marriages had been to Isaac, he, thinking to mend the matter, and, to ingratiate himself with his father, went and married one of the daughters of Ishmael. This is usually described as one of the hasty blunders of Esau: but we do not see that it was. According to Bedouin usages, this was the most proper marriage he could form, and, in fact, the hand of Ishmael's eldest daughter was due to the eldest son of Isaac as a matter of right, and, as to religious belief and practice, the house of Ishmael was probably at this time as pure, and probably more so than that of Laban. The *necessity* for sending to Mesopotamia for a wife only existed in the case of Isaac, who otherwise must have married a woman of alien race. But now there were grand-daughters of Abraham, through Hagar and Keturah—nearer in blood and, at least, as suitable for wives to the sons of Isaac as were the daughters of Laban, the resort to whom now by Jacob does not prove that no other resort was lawful, but was the result of circumstances, among which may be reckoned the fact that Isaac himself had been supplied from thence, together with the natural partialities of Rebekah for her own family in Padan-Aram. If no other course were proper in this generation, neither would any other have been so in the next; and yet not one of Jacob's twelve sons took a wife from the house of Laban. After that, the question became simplified; for the sons and daughters of these twelve sons could and did intermarry. But notwithstanding this view of the matter, exonerative of Esau, it was doubtless for wise purposes that while the heirship of the promises was still vested in a single person, that person should be compelled by circumstances so to marry as to obviate all danger of that intermixture of the chosen line with even proximate tribes, which it was a part of the divine plan to prevent.

Dates.—We are now arrived at the year of the world 3495, the year before Christ 1916; the year of Isaac 137, the year of Esau and Jacob 77.



[Oriental Shepherds.]

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES.

(1) CIRCUMCISION, p. 53.—Although the history of this very remarkable rite has received much attention, and vast quantities of writing have been expended upon it, it would be hard to say that it is not fairly entitled to all the notice it has obtained. Even were it less prominent in all the history of the Jewish people, the importance which a large part of the world, even to this day, attaches to a rite in itself so singular, would render it a subject well worthy of consideration.

The first point, and that which has provoked the largest measure of discussion, is involved in the question,—Whether the rite of circumcision, as commanded to Abraham, was an original institution, and its existence among other people is to be assigned to this source, or that it, previously to this institution, existed in any other nation with, or without, the knowledge of Abraham? On this question the disputants join issue; the argument being better balanced, or less capable of decision than those who have given little attention to the subject would imagine. The popular opinion on the subject will be found generally to amount to this—that the rite of circumcision was founded on the occasion to which the text refers, and that it was peculiar to the Jews till the time of Mohammed, who adopted that and many other practices from the Hebrew ritual, and that to these two denominations it is now confined. All these opinions are wrong, except the first, and that remains an open question. The others are not likely to be entertained by many of the readers of this work, and therefore need engage but little of our attention. It may suffice to observe that the rite of circumcision was *not* in later times peculiar to the Jews, inasmuch as not only does history mention the Egyptians, Ethiopians, and other nations as being circumcised, but the Scripture itself speaks of the Egyptians, and also of the Ishmaelites and Edomites, descended from Abraham, and the Moabites and Ammonites, descended from Lot, as nations circumcised in flesh, though not in heart;* and Jerome, in his comment on the text from which we derive this information, says that the Ishmaelites of the deserts continued in his time to be circumcised. He had opportunities of *knowing* what he states, and lived two centuries before Mohammed. That legislator merely adopted into his religious system the rite which had been immemorially practised among his countrymen, and the use of which, if he had so desired, he might have found it difficult to eradicate; and that the rite is at this day observed not only by Jews and Moslems, but by Christian and Heathen nations, we shall have occasion to show before this note is concluded.

In returning to the question, whether the rite of circumcision existed among other people, we must refer to the passage which has already been adduced from the prophet Jeremiah, and examine the list of circumcised nations which he gives. The case of the Ishmaelites and Edomites is easily dismissed, as it is evident that they might derive the rite from their forefathers, the son and grandson of Abraham, who were unquestionably circumcised. The case of the Moabites and Ammonites is rather more difficult; as Lot had separated from Abraham many years before the covenant of circumcision was given to that patriarch. It seems very likely, however, that Lot did circumcise his sons, Moab and Ammon: for he had lived near enough to know all that occurred to Abraham, and could not well be ignorant that the rite had been instituted, and the manner in which its non-observance had been denounced; and the circumcision of his sons would, on account of his near relationship to the patriarch, seem to him a very proper method by which to perpetuate a connection of which he had every reason to be proud, as well as to exempt his heirs from the operation of those exclusions denounced against the uncircumcised. This probability is strengthened by the fact that Isaac was born nearly at the same time with Moab and Ammon; and Abraham's circumcision of the infant on the eighth day, was well calculated to lead Lot to execute the same rite upon his two sons. Whether this be correct or not, it cannot be disputed that the Moabites and Ammonites were *in a condition* to derive their circumcision in some way or other from the Hebrew institution; and therefore they may, like the Ishmaelites and Edomites, be set aside as no parties in the discussion. The question then lies between the Jews and the Egyptians; for the inner question, whether the Ethiopians or the Egyptians had it first, is of no present

* Jer. ix. 24.

importance here; but most readers, with the light now possessed, will hesitate little to pronounce that circumcision came to the Egyptians through Ethiopia, *if it was not* imitated from the Hebrew institution.

Perhaps in speaking of circumcision in connection with Egypt, one would rather say that it existed in that country, than that the Egyptians were a circumcised people. Among them it was by no means universal, as it was among the Hebrews; and appears to have been only obligatory upon the priesthood, and on those who sought access to their mysteries and sciences. Thus understood, the existence of the rite is of such high antiquity among them as very fairly to raise the question whether they or the Jews had it first. The amount of the information obtainable from the Greek historians is, that the rite existed from the earliest times among the Egyptians and Ethiopians; that it was disputed with which of these nations it originated; but it was universally considered that the Jews and other western Asiatics which exercised the rite, had derived it from the Egyptians; and so much indeed was this the feeling, that even so distant a people as the Colchians were regarded as an Egyptian colony merely on the ground that circumcision existed among them.* In short, it seems never to have entered the minds of the classical writers but that the Egyptians practised circumcision before any of the people of western Asia among whom it was also found. But their opinion on this point is not of much value; for, seeing that the oldest of them lived a thousand years after Moses, the times which seemed to them ancient and immemorial, may have been modern as compared with the time of Abraham; and its existence or not *before* his time, is the question under review. Unless, therefore, the claim they make for the Egyptians is supported by collateral corroborations, it cannot by any means stand. Such corroborations may be found in the unlikelihood that the Egyptians would borrow such a rite from the Hebrews; and, secondly, in the probability that it existed before the command concerning it was given to Abraham.

It will be borne in mind that Egypt appears to have long been a settled and even a civilised nation at the time when the father of the Hebrew race took refuge in that country from famine; and that it was soon after his return from thence that the command concerning circumcision was given. When this first act of intercourse took place, circumcision did not, therefore, exist on the part of Abraham; but if it did exist on the part of the Egyptians, he could not fail to know it, not only because his visit to that country, but because afterwards he had in his household persons who knew the usages of Egypt better than himself—being the men-servants and women-servants he had received from Pharaoh. And that the Egyptians then practised this ceremony, is rendered probable by the consideration that the Egyptians, who were even at this time an important nation, afterwards became more important, and that their system of rites and usages was fixed and settled, and was confided to the charge of men who, of all others, hated change and innovation the most, by, and long before, the time that the Hebrews were in a condition to make any impression upon the Egyptians, or could be supposed by that proud people to have any practice which was worthy of their adoption. This could not have been before the time of Solomon; and who supposes that the Egyptian system would *then* have admitted such a rite as circumcision if it had been till then excluded? When Jacob went down into Egypt with seventy souls, the males were undoubtedly circumcised; but were the Egyptians then, or during the ensuing bondage, likely to adopt so marked and distinguishing a practice from a people who were "an abomination" to them as pastoral nomades, and whom they afterwards brought into hard and bitter bondage, and treated as slaves? That, of all the people on earth, the Egyptian *priests* should be those who would then, or after (and certainly not *before*) adopt this rite from a people so adverse in all respects to them, and circumstanced as the Hebrews were, seems almost the most unlikely thing possible to happen, in the regard of one who possesses but the faintest notion of the character of the Egyptian hierarchy. Their system was then at least established; and, after the establishment of their system, their aversion to all change, and especially to the adoption of foreign rites and customs, was perfectly proverbial. The disposition of the Hebrews was exactly the reverse; and it would be difficult to find in all history a people who were more disposed to the adoption of foreign manners and ideas (Egyptian, especially), or more prone to disfigure, by alien rites and opinions, the form and substance of that noble system of faith and worship which they received amidst the thunders of Sinai.

When the Israelites, having long discontinued circumcision in the desert, were on the point of entering the promised land, they were circumcised, and God said, "This day have I rolled away *the reproach of Egypt* from off you." From this Le Clerc, Michaelis, and

* Herodotus, ii. 36, 104; Diod. Sicul. i. 26, iii. 32; Strabo, xvii. p. 1140.

others, are clear that the Egyptians had the rite of circumcision before this time, and that they reproached the Israelites for the neglect of it into which they had fallen. We note this passage; but, as interpretations are very different, we shall ourselves lay no stress upon it in the way of evidence.

Seeing, then, the unlikelihood that the Egyptians should take this rite from the Hebrews, let us inquire whether there was any probability that the observance existed before the use of it was commanded to Abraham. And, in the first place, was it necessary that it should be an original observance? Since so much has been said, first and last, about the analogy between circumcision and baptism, we shall be allowed to ask, why it was more necessary that circumcision than that baptism should, *as a rite*, be divinely originated? Yet everybody knows that baptism was in most extensive use, among both Jews and Heathen, long before it was adopted as the seal and symbol of the Christian faith. But although not original, *as a rite*, baptism was original *as an institution*, and as such—as the sign of a series of meanings, associations, and symbols—it was and is peculiar to the Christians, although the simple rite, with a different series of meanings and applications, may be, and is, still in use among nations which are not Christian. So, possibly, of circumcision. In both cases the institution is everything, the rite in itself nothing: and the institution would be original, even if the rite had existed from the beginning of the world. Thus the Hebrew circumcision was a sign and seal of God's covenant with Abraham; and as such, it was peculiar to him: so it would have been if the sign had been a peculiar cut of the hair, or of the beard, or the excision of a finger-joint —although other nations may before and after have performed the same operations, as the sign of something else, or of nothing. If this illustration may dispose the reader to allow that there is no theological objection to the previous existence of the observance, he will allow due weight to the following considerations bearing on the *probability* of this circumstance. They are taken, with abridgments, from Michaelis:—

"When we consider the style of the seventeenth chapter of Genesis, it does not look as if the command it contained regarded a surgical operation altogether new, and before unknown, and one, too, so painful and dangerous as the circumcision of adults proves. Abraham is merely commanded to circumcise himself, and all the males of his house. Now, although we have among us circumcised Jews, such a command would not, perhaps, even now be understood by many Europeans, unless a description was annexed. . . . Circumcision may be performed in more ways than one. The present Jewish mode is actually different from that of the Mohammedans, Egyptians, and Ethiopians. But so little is said by God in the first passage where circumcision is instituted, that *we* cannot so much as know with any probability what species of it he commanded; yet Abraham must have understood him, and, consequently, the meaning of the term must at that time have been clear, from the practice it expressed. Should it be said, that God may have given to Abraham a description of the surgical process, although Moses has omitted it, because it was sufficiently known in his time, it still remains incomprehensible how it could have been, as is expressly mentioned in Gen. xvii. 26, 27, in one and the same day performed upon the whole house of Abraham, to which even some years before there belonged, exclusive of children and bought servants, 318 *born* servants, capable of bearing arms. This, we should think, must have required the employment of persons perfectly accustomed to the operation. If they had no such operators, the business could not have been dispatched so expeditiously, for the person who was to perform the operation must necessarily have first learned it by repeated trials. And how can we, without supposing a great miracle, of which, however, Moses says not a word, imagine that if *all* the servants of Abraham were previously uncircumcised, they would all have submitted to so painful an operation, at his mere command?" After enforcing this, by supposing the undoubted resistance which would be offered to a nobleman who should order several hundred peasants (serfs) to be circumcised in one day, he goes on to infer that some of Abraham's servants must have been already circumcised, and that, by their help, he enforced obedience upon the rest. "But if so, circumcision could not have been very uncommon at that time among other nations besides the Egyptians."

We think the reference which Michaelis makes to the case of the Shechemites very strongly to the purpose. When the prince of Shechem wished to marry Jacob's daughter, Dinah, her brothers insisted, as a necessary preliminary condition, that he and his whole city should be circumcised; adding, as a reason, —"We cannot do such a thing as give our sister to a man uncircumcised. It would be a reproach unto us." "This," observes our author, "would have been quite ridiculous, if Abraham's family had been the only one on earth then circumcised. Others would perhaps have laughed at them; but no one would have

deemed it a reproach to them to let a daughter marry a man uncircumcised. To her lover, however, the proposal was so far from appearing ridiculous, that he persuaded all the males of his city to submit to circumcision along with himself." Michaelis also conjectures from John vii. 22, that circumcision even existed among Abraham's own forefathers. If this were true, it would offer a very satisfactory reason for Lot's probable circumcision of Moab and Ammon; but the *reasoning* on which this is founded, though the *fact* itself may not be unlikely is too weak to build upon.[a]

Now, we have no particular feeling for the Egyptian part of the question; but seeing that the question has been made to turn principally on the point, as between the Jews and the Egyptians, it may be well to direct attention to the circumstance, that, whatever tends to show the probability that the rite existed at all before Abraham, is favourable to the prior claim of that most ancient people.

But although it thus seems probable that other nations, and in particular the Egyptians, had this rite before Abraham, it by no means follows that the nation which had it first gave it to all the others. In the instance of Abraham himself,—although he probably knew the rite as previously existing,—we know not that he or his posterity would ever have adopted it, unless they had been commanded to do so; and, on the other hand, if, as some will persist in believing, the operation was not previously known, we should see no reason to conclude that all the nations among whom it has since existed, have received it from the Abrahamic institution. As to the Israelites themselves, no nation that had it was ever likely to borrow it from them—not assuredly the Egyptians or the Ethiopians. In the days of their glory the Jews had no intercourse with distant nations; and now that their glory has departed from them, and that their dispersion has given a wide *knowledge* of the rite to the world, what nation has there been which was likely to take from a race so despised or hated, a rite so painful and so peculiar? The Mahommedans have done more than they to diffuse circumcision, and their circumcision may certainly be traced, through the Arabians and Ishmael, to Abraham; and the extension of the Moslem dominion and influence, on the one hand, with the presence of Jews on the other, makes it difficult to find original indications of the rite among other nations or races; because in making such inquiries one feels aware of the difficulty of excluding the possible influence of either the Moslems or the Jews; at least the possibility of such influence puts a ready answer into the mouths of those whose habits of thinking indispose them to receive the position we would wish to establish. But, nevertheless, let us consider that to the Jews and Moslems circumcision is eminently a distinguishing religious rite, so that he who is not born in those religions is considered to adopt the one or other when he is circumcised, and unless he be circumcised he has no part in them. Neither Jews nor Moslems present circumcision in any other light to the heathen; nor do the heathen among whom they happen to dwell ever view it otherwise than as the distinguishing initiatory rite of the Moslem or the Jew. It is, therefore, not very likely that the heathen should, under any circumstances, borrow the grand religious rite—apart from all the circumstances and ideas connected with it—of Jews or Moslems, both of whom regard all idolatry with loathing and abhorrence; and the antipathy which they are at no pains to conceal, seems far more likely to excite in the minds of idolaters an aversion to circumcision, as the symbol of religion most opposed to their own, than to recommend it to their adoption. Under such circumstances we should not expect that any would adopt circumcision but those who received with it the faith and the name of the Israelite or the Mahommedan: and this conclusion is supported by fact; for no instance is on record in which any nation or body of men have adopted circumcision from the Jews in ancient or modern times, or from the Moslems, even in those countries where they have reigned over the heathen, unless as a sign of their adoption therewith of the Jewish or Moslem faith. If therefore we, in ancient or modern times, find circumcision among the heathen, we are scarcely warranted to infer that they derived it from Jews or Moslems, even if we find that they knew the rite well as practised by those peoples; but still less if they could know it thus but slightly, or not at all; and least of all, if, while they have the rite, the ideas which they connect with it are entirely different, and all the circumstances are different, and nothing but the naked rite is similar.

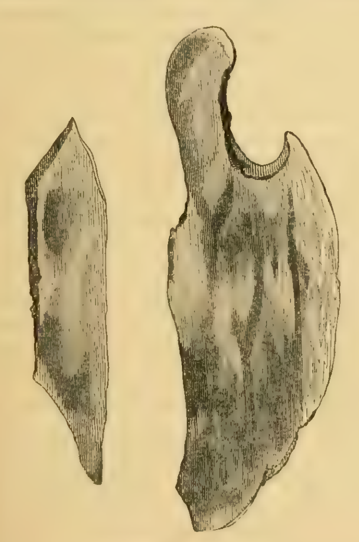
But where do we find the conformities which would indicate a common origin? Among the Egyptians, the rite was incumbent only on the priests, and on those who proposed to devote themselves to those mysteries and sciences which partook of a religious nature; not that the rite itself was considered religious, or had any such ideas connected with it, as the Jews

[a] Michaelis 'Commentaries,' vol. iii., art. 186.

entertained, but because circumcision, in their hot climate, was held to contribute to the bodily cleanness required of those who approached the gods, for which reason they also shaved all the hair from their bodies. It was also known that circumcision was a good prevention of a painful cutaneous disorder (called a carbuncle), to which the uncircumcised were much subject in that climate. Apion, an Egyptian, who had written against the Jews, sneering at their circumcision among other things, is answered by Josephus, that the Egyptians themselves were circumcised; but that all of them were not so, appears from his adding, that this Apion himself was obliged to be circumcised in his old age, on account of an ulcer. And for these reasons, many of the common Egyptians were circumcised, although the rite was obligatory only on the class we have indicated.

It also appears that the Egyptians did not perform the rite until the age of puberty, and that they circumcised females as well as males; and, upon the whole, the differences in everything, except the simple surgical operation, were so very great, that the learned Origen, himself a native of Egypt, and well acquainted with its usages, was unable to see anything in common between the Jewish and Egyptian observances.*

We do not know for certainty that the Egyptians employed flint-knives in performing the operation of circumcision; but as they generally used such knives for incisions on the human person, it is more than likely they used them for this service. It is hence remarkable that, while the Hebrews were in, and again when they had lately left, Egypt, we read of their employing flint-knives in circumcision,* and such are employed by many of the Oriental Jews to this day. This may be supposed, for obvious reasons, to have been adopted, as an indifferent practice, from the Egyptians, and was *generally* relinquished when their example ceased to operate; for the Jews hold, in principle, that any instrument of any material may be employed. This small analogy, which is only curious in an antiquarian point of view, and not affecting the claims of either party to the origination of the rite, is the only one we can find.†



[Egyptian Flint-knives.]

Of the Ethiopian circumcision we know little, save the fact that it was immemorially ancient in the time of the earliest Greek writers. The Abyssinians are, we suppose, to be regarded as an Ethiopian people, although the ancients generally, when speaking definitely of Ethiopia, mean a country nearer Egypt. That the Abyssinians ultimately adopted Judaism is certain; and if they are included in the statement which refers to the circumcision of the Ethiopians, they must have possessed the rite long before the earliest of the dates to which their conversion is assigned, the fact being, probably, that their conversion was much facilitated by their previous possession of this rite. That they did not get circumcision originally from the Jews, seems to be intimated by various circumstances; such as their including females in this rite, which the Jews never did; and by their continuing to retain the rite after their adoption of Christianity,—for national and immemorial habits are there retained with most tenacity under all changes, whereas habits of foreign and recent introduction are relinquished with comparative ease. All great legislators have known this; and instead of attempting to extirpate such habits root and branch, have rather moulded them into conformity with their own system.‡

In like manner to the Abyssinians, the Copts, who are generally regarded as the descendants of the ancient Egyptians, and who never passed through Judaism to the form of Christianity which they now hold, retain circumcision as the relic of an ancient national usage, to which they do not profess to attach any religious meaning, and which they are at

* Strabo, l. xvii.; Philo. Jud. de Circumcisione, 810; Joseph. contra Apion, ii. 13; Clement. Alexand. Stromata, l. i; Origen in Rom. ii. 13, et Jerem. ix. 24; Ambros. l. ii. de Abraham, c. 2.

* Exod. iv. 25; Josh. v. 2, in the original.

† Herodot. ii. 86; Maimonides, M. Nevochim, i. 16; Hilchot Milah, c. 2, sec. 1, and c. 264, sec. 1; Pfeiffer, Dubia Vexata, cent. ii. loc. 46.

‡ See, *passim*, the various particulars concerning Abyssinian circumcision in Purchas, Bruce, Salt, and Gobat.

some pains to reconcile with their Christian profession.*

The prevalence of circumcision in the African continent is indeed remarkable. We find it everywhere, from the Mediterranean coast to the Cape of Good Hope, and from the coast of Guinea to the Arabian Gulf. We find it not only among the Moslems of the north, but among the heathen of the south and west, and among the Christians of the north-east. Among the heathen nations we find the *time* generally different from that of the Jews and Moslems; hardly any of them regard it as a religious ceremony; but it seems to be looked upon much in the light of a surgical operation, performed in the most convenient way, and unconnected with any particular observances. If asked why they perform this operation, the answer generally is, that their fathers always did it, and they ought to do the same, or that it is good for them; and in those cases where they might have known something of Moslems, never does the most ignorant Fetish worshipper allege that the rite was borrowed from them. In some of these nations the females also are circumcised—a custom almost peculiar to the circumcision of Africa, and of which the Jews never dreamed. These are general conclusions from the whole; but circumcision, among even the African heathens, offers so many differing details in the respective nations, as alone militates against the idea of a common origin, and still more when any comparison is made between theirs and the Jewish and Moslem forms of the rite.†

A sort of circumcision was found existing among some of the native tribes of America, particularly in Yucatan, and on the shores of the South Sea, which, with other circumstances, led some writers to think they had found in these nations the lost tribes of Israel, but which the plain good sense of the present day rather attributes to the spontaneous suggestions of physical convenience.

All that has been said on this subject also applies with much force to those traces of the custom which may be found in Asia apart from the profession of the Moslem faith.

One observation it may be desirable to make, which is, that it is exclusively in warm climates that the rite is found, unconnected with the Jewish or Moslem faith; and from this and all the preceding statements the question arises, whether there is not something in the results of a high temperature which suggested to different nations, without the necessity of derivation from one to another, the removal of the part which is separated by circumcision. We think it was so; and, more, we think it was for such reasons that a rite in itself so useful and wholesome—though strange to our northern ideas—was chosen as the seal of the covenant with Abraham, in preference to any other act which might have served the same purpose without being equally useful.

Some of the uses have already been intimated,—such as cleanliness, and the prevention of a dangerous and painful disease. Dr. Russell, the physician of our factory at Aleppo, assured Niebuhr of the usefulness of the rite for those purposes, and explained how the uncircumcised were subject to distressing tumours from which the circumcised were wholly free. The traveller has more on this subject, offering valuable confirmation of the statements of Josephus and Philo-Judæus; and affording other instances in which the operation becomes *physically* convenient, and, in many cases, necessary in the East. That circumcision was held to conduce to a more numerous posterity we know from Philo, but the means of observation we still possess may render the fact itself very doubtful. Michaelis talks of a great naturalist who thought there was also a moral use in circumcision, inasmuch as it tended to make more difficult, though not absolutely to prevent, a secret wickedness to which Oriental youth are very prone: but he knew not that a very eminent Jew, Maimonides, had long before stated this as a principal benefit of circumcision.*

Thus understood, we obtain another illustration of a policy very common in God's dealings with the Hebrews, by which some act, in itself medically or morally useful, is made compulsory, by its adoption for some symbolical or ceremonial purpose. Thus is magnified the wisdom and beneficence of that great God whose service was never made to require any act hurtful or of no use to his servants.

(2) Use of Animal Food in the East, p. 54.—This is only one out of many instances in Scripture which show that the practice of the Asiatics was, in the earliest times, similar, in this respect, to that which still prevails

* Lane's 'Modern Egyptians,' ii. 310.

† The limits of a note, and the length to which this has already run, precludes us from stating the details of these usages; but for the benefit of the reader who may be disposed to examine the subject, we give the following references to the facts we have collected, and on which the above conclusions are founded.—'Voyages to Western Africa,' in Astley's collection, 1746, vol. ii. 187-8, 542, 641; vol. iii. pp. 21, 25. 'Hist. Gen. des Voyages,' viii. 601; Ludolph. Hist. Æthiopica,' l. ii. c. 1; Hurd's 'Hist. of Religious Rites,' 390; and (from Kolben on Caffraria) 395, 412, 414; Oldendorp's 'Hist. of Mission to the Caribbee Islands,' 129, 297-8, in Michaelis.

* 'Reasons of the Laws of Moses, from the *More Nevochim* of Maimonides,' by James Townley, D.D., p. 331.

throughout Asia, and which is entirely opposite to our own. In Europe few persons can bear the idea of eating meat the cookery of which had commenced before its fibre has hardened, and the warmth of life has thoroughly departed from it: but in the East the meat is considered best which is cooked the soonest after life is extinct; and the Orientals regard with aversion that which has been kept so long before dressing as ours usually is. In no case is meat which has been killed in the morning kept undressed till the ensuing day, although if killed in the evening—which is rarely the case—it may be kept till the day following. The law of Moses even took up this matter as one of police; for seeing that there were seasons when, in consequence of ample peace-offerings, animal food would be most abundant, and a great temptation would arise to the reservation of part for future consumption, it interfered and directed that all should be consumed on the same day, and that if any of it were left, it should be destroyed by fire. The reason of all this is plain. The heat of the climate produces the appearances of decomposition in animal substances with amazing rapidity, and about the same time which in our climates would be required to pass before meat is considered *fit* for eating, would in the East be so much too long, as to render it disgustingly unfit for food. So there is reason on both sides, with some allowance for the disposition which exists everywhere to carry practices into extremes. It will thus be seen that, in such cases as the present, the practice is not to be understood as resulting from the urgency of the occasion, but is quite in the line of the regular practice, according to which even those who, on particular occasions, slaughter their own meat for a regular meal, or a pre-determined feast, postpone the slaughter till near the time when the cooking must be commenced. One consequence of this practice is, that meat in the East is always what we should consider over-done: for it is only by over-dressing that meat so recently slaughtered can be rendered tender and fit for use.

([3]) THE FOOD OF ANGELS, p. 54.—Josephus, in his version of this incident, says not that the angels ate, but that they *made a show of eating*. The Targums of Jonathan and Jarchi convey the same intimation. This is evidently founded on the old notion that angels, being spiritual creatures, could not eat or assimilate the food fit for a being so much more gross as man. It is evident we cannot know how they proceed in their natural condition, but there appears no reason why they might not eat the food of earth when they took the form of men—unless they took the form of an imperfect man, which is not very likely. We prefer to take literally the Scripture statement that "they did eat." Milton, who was well acquainted with all the dreams of the rabbins and the schoolmen on the subject, honestly laughs at their useless speculations, and, after alleging that—

> "Whatever was created needs
> To be sustain'd and fed,"

tells us of his archangel (Raphael) and Adam, that—

> "Down they sat
> And to their viands fell; nor seemingly
> The angel, nor in mist, the common gloss
> Of theologians; but with keen dispatch
> Of real hunger."

The reader who will take the trouble to examine the full report of the rabbinical notices concerning angels which may be found in the first volume of Bartoloccio's 'Bibliotheca Magna Rabbinica,' will see a remarkable analogy between their speculations and those of the Angelical Doctor,* and others of the scholastic craft.

([4]) LOT'S MARRIED DAUGHTERS, p. 56.—There is another very current interpretation, which supposes that, instead of reading of Lot's "sons-in-law, which [had] married his daughters," we should read, "which were to have married his daughters;" that is to say, that he really had no daughters, and that the persons called his sons-in-law were only betrothed to the virgin daughters who continued to live with him. But we have followed the view of our translators, as judging it to agree best with all the circumstances. Thus we see that when Lot was ordered by the angels to hasten his departure, he was told, "Arise, take thy wife and thy two daughters, *which are here*," &c., which seems clearly enough to intimate that there were other daughters not there—his married daughters—whom he could not take. The supposition that married daughters were left behind, to perish in the overthrow of the city, does also afford a satisfactory and touching explanation of Lot's lingering reluctance to leave the city, of his wife's wistful loitering behind, and even of some parts of his preserved daughters' conduct in the cave.

([5]) THE PHILISTINES, p. 58.—In pages 34, 35 of this work, and in the 'Pictorial Bible,' under Gen. xxv. 34, and Exod. i. 8, we have taken some notice of a race of "Shepherd Kings," who made an irruption into Lower Egypt, and held that country in subjection 260

* Thomas Aquinas.

years. We have expressed our reasons for believing that the period of their rule commenced before Abraham, and ended before Joseph; consequently, that a shepherd king reigned at the time of Abraham's visit, and a native prince at the time that the house of Israel went down into Egypt. We have now to intimate our persuasion that this intrusive dynasty, being expelled from Egypt, proceeded northward, and, settling in the country from which they expelled the Avim, became the "Philistines" of the sacred history.

As the limits of our work will allow us but little space for the investigation of the origin or history of even those nations which the history of the Hebrews must bring much under our notice, we must abstain from some truly curious matters of inquiry connected with the history of this people *before* their incursion into Egypt, and confine ourselves to those points which may contribute to the illustration of our leading narrative. And in fulfilling even this limited object, we must take the liberty of assuming some points which those of our readers who have a general acquaintance with the subject will know to be little open to dispute, and which those who have not may very safely take for granted.

That the Philistines came from Egypt seems to be now very generally agreed. The Bible states repeatedly that they came from the country of Caphtor, and that this means Lower Egypt is now very rarely called in question. Now from Lower Egypt only two people could come, as a people, either the native Egyptians (say a body of them fleeing from the Shepherds), or the Shepherds when expelled by the Egyptians. They were not Egyptians; because there is no record that the Egyptians did at any time seek a refuge in the land of Canaan. When oppressed in Lower Egypt, *their* retreat at all times was Upper Egypt, and there is positive record that this was their resort on the invasion of the Shepherds. Besides, although the Philistines look like a people who had been in Egypt, and who had been under the operation of its civilising influences, and although they remained in the close neighbourhood of Egypt, nothing ever transpires in their subsequent history to convey the slightest intimation that the Egyptians ever recognised them as brethren. If they had been Egyptians, they might have returned to their own country after the shepherds were expelled, or, at least, we may with tolerable certainty infer that they would have hastened to claim kindred with, if not to put themselves under the protection of, the powerful parent state. But so far are we from hearing anything of this, that in fact the Egyptians and Philistines are never mentioned together in all Scripture, except to intimate that the Egyptians acted against them, including them, with the Jews, among the enemies in that part of Syria against whom they sometimes warred. They were less connected with Egypt than even the Jews, to whom that country had been the house of bondage; there is never the slightest intimation of any alliance between these near neighbours; the Philistines never assisted the Egyptians in their wars; they were never helped by Egypt in any of their difficulties, nor did they resort to that country in any of their troubles. It is clear that the Philistines had no claim to the Egyptian name, though they bear the marks of a people who had been in Egypt. It would on these grounds appear to us strongly probable that they were a remnant of the intrusive shepherds; and this probability strengthens into a conviction when to this negative evidence is added that of a positive character which we now proceed to adduce.

In the history of the expulsion of the shepherds, which is given by Manetho, in a precious fragment preserved by Josephus,* we are told that the native Egyptian princes ultimately rose against the intrusive tyrants, and after a tedious warfare drove them out of the rest of Egypt, and shut them up in Avaris.† But, despairing of success, the Egyptians concluded a treaty with them, and they were suffered to depart unmolested from Egypt, with all their households, amounting to 240,000 souls, and their cattle. Accordingly, they crossed the desert, and went and settled in Palestine. Manetho's account is clear in this point; though at first view an awkwardness and uncertainty is produced by his confounding them with another shepherd race (the Israelites) who arrived not (historically) very long after the departure of the Shepherds, and who, after a stay of almost equal duration, departed to the same country. Now among the early inhabitants of Palestine, before the Jews, there was no nation that can for an instant be supposed to have come from Egypt, or whose identification with the Shepherds can be even sus-

* Contra Apion, i. 14.

† This is previously described by Manetho as an old city in the Saite nome, conveniently situated on the north side of the Bubastic canal of the Nile. One of the shepherd kings, anxious to secure the eastern part of the country against any invasion from the Assyrians, who were then very powerful, rebuilt this city, and fortified it most strongly, and garrisoned it with 240,000 soldiers. To this place he used to come in summer to furnish them with corn and pay; and he disciplined them so carefully, that they became a terror to foreigners. This place was afterwards called Pelusium, where they had collected all their cattle and plunder, and besieged them with an army of 480,000 men.

pected, save the Philistines, whose situation, in the part of the country nearest to Egypt, would alone direct attention to them in the first instance, apart from any other considerations.

All the information which Mr. Wilkinson could obtain concerning the date of the building of the Egyptian pyramids, led him to conclude that they were built about the year 2120 B. C., a sufficiently close approximation to Hales, whose historical comparisons gave him the date of 2095 B. C., as that at which the first pyramid began to be built. According to both accounts, therefore, they were erected about or a little before the time of Abraham's visit to Egypt, about 2077 B. C. Now, Herodotus, who was allowed by the priests—who held the keys of knowledge—to take some transient and obscure glimpses into the history of those ancient times, lets out the fact, that at the time the pyramids were erected, a shepherd called *Philitis* fed his flocks in that country, and that his name was given to those renowned erections. How remarkably does this, in its incidental way, corroborate our former conclusion, that the Shepherds were in Egypt about the time of Abraham's visit; as well as our present argument, that these Shepherds were the *Philistines;* and how much is not this last position confirmed when we learn that the word *Philitis* means *a shepherd,* and *Philistines* are *shepherds;* while the word Palestine or Pali-sthan—which first their own district in Canaan, and afterwards the whole country took from them—means Shepherd-Land. As the Philistines appear, before the Biblical student, more as warriors than as shepherds, it may be well to remind the reader that these two characters are, in the East, perfectly compatible; and that, in fact, whatever they became in later ages, they were noted for their cattle in the days of the patriarchs, and during the sojourn of the House of Israel in Egypt. This will appear from the disputes between the herdsmen of Isaac and Abimelech, as well as from the circumstance that while the Israelites dwelt in the land of Goshen,* a party of Ephraimites undertook a truly Bedouin expedition across the desert to drive off the flocks of the Philistines of Gath.†

All the particulars which we know of the Philistines are in entire agreement with this explanation, and none are opposed to it. A people who had ruled Lower Egypt for 260 years may be expected to exhibit some characteristics in their institutions and manners similar to those which we encounter in Egypt. Abraham and Isaac were never in apprehension about their wives, except in Egypt and in the land of the Philistines, and in both countries the king took Sarah to his harem. The kings of the Philistines had a title or official name, Abimelech, used precisely as the name of Pharaoh was in Egypt; and the kings in the time of Abraham and Isaac had such an officer as a " captain of the host," a functionary we shall not at this early date meet with elsewhere, unless in Egypt, nor yet such a military organization as the mere existence of such a functionary implies. This officer is also named on the same Egyptian principle as his master: the chief captain of the host was Phichol in the time of Abraham, and is still Phichol when Isaac visits the Philistine territory, a hundred years later. In short, their whole appearance offers that mixture of pastoral and Egyptian habits which we should expect the shepherds from Egypt to exhibit; and in the same degree in which such of their usages as we can ascertain are in agreement with those of the Egyptians, in that degree do they differ from those of the native Canaanites, with whom they are never seen to have any feeling or interest in common, even on those occasions when all the inhabitants of the land might be expected to unite as one man in resistance to the invading Israelites, and when, in fact, powerful confederacies were formed for that purpose by the native princes. The Philistines were the most inveterate enemies which the Hebrews in Canaan ever had; and yet in their wars we find them proceeding as a distinct people, with separate interests of their own,—acting by themselves and for themselves, assisted by none, and never assisting others.

* Thirty years before the exode according to the Chaldee paraphrast.

† 1 Chron. vii. 21.

(6) WORSHIP IN GROVES, p. 62.—The use of groves as places of primitive worship is natural and easily understood, though it could only have arisen in an early state of society, or be preserved where society remained in a primitive condition. It was the thought of a people who had not made any advances in architecture—who dwelt in tents or in huts—and who, while they did not feel that these dwellings were unsuitable or inadequate for themselves, could not but be sensible that they were so unimpressive, that it seemed revolting to associate with them, in any more formal service of worship, the idea of that God who fills all nature and of whose grandeur they had no unworthy notions. They, therefore, preferred to seek intercourse with Him, and to render Him their service amid the vastness of his own creation, and under the shadow of those anient woods, which insensibly inspire us with

awe, and fill us with reverential feelings, which turn and vent themselves upon whatever has been customarily before the mind as the proper object of its reverence. Happy when that object is God!—as it was to the patriarchs. There is no doubt that men had this use for groves, almost universally, before any temples existed; but it is not so clear to us that, as some suppose, groves were used for religious purposes, before even altars were known. But Noah constructed an altar as soon as he left the ark; and this use of groves must, therefore, have been antediluvian, if it existed before altars: and this is certainly more than we know. It is certain, however, that, under the operation of the ideas we are tracing, altars were placed in the groves; and the next step was probably to build a hut near at hand to contain the implements of sacrifice; and when men had begun to build in their groves, the idea of a chapel or oratory for use in inclement weather, and when the trees were, in winter, bare of foliage, would naturally have been suggested. When, at last, the increased resources of constructive art, coupled with a weaker and more humanised idea of God, led men to entertain the bold idea of rearing fabrics—"temples made with hands"—which might make impressions on the mind worthy of his worship and service, the influence of old habits and old associations still operated. Most nations took care, when in their power, to plant groves around these buildings, for the most part with an enclosing ditch, hedge, or wall; and these groves were not only consecrated to the gods in whose honour the temples in the midst of them had been built, but were themselves places of sanctuary for criminals who fled to them for refuge.

As to the corruptions which became, in the end, associated with groves, and which led Moses to prohibit them very strictly, and to command that the groves which were found, in the land of Canaan, consecrated to idols, should be cut down,—another opportunity will be afforded us of considering this part of the subject. Meanwhile, we only wish to call attention to the point alluded to in the text, respecting some points of analogy in this matter between the practices and the ideas of the patriarchs and those of the Celtic Druids. Among them we seem to find preserved, down to a late date, many of the ideas and practices which equally belong to the patriarchal ages, and which are doubtless to be regarded as relics of the religion which was common to all men in the first ages, and which they carried with them to the several places of their dispersion. In process of time these primitive institutions were in almost every country woefully corrupted, or indeed lost, in various modifications of ceremony, idolatry, and unbelief. The Hebrew patriarchs doubtless exhibit in purity the religion of anterior ages, and what had been the sole religion of mankind; and thus he who studies the history of religious notions and practices is supplied with a test which enables him to ascertain the traces of this primitive religion, which may have been preserved in different and distant nations. Now we know not of any people who preserved, mixed with many and awful corruptions, so many traces of this ancient religion as existed in the Druidical institutions and religion of the Celtes. It is true they had idols, and that many wild notions were entertained, and many horrid rites practised by them; but, amidst all, they believed in one supreme Being, to whom all other gods were far inferior. His symbol was the oak, and him, exclusively, they worshipped amid the groves. They never had images of him, or erected temples to him; and Tacitus, speaking of the Senones, who were a branch of the Celtes, and had the same religion, tells us that its principle consisted in the acknowledgment that the Deity whom they worshipped in the groves—the God without name—was he who governed all things, on whom all things depended, and whom all beings were bound to obey.

There are other resemblances which would render our position more clear if we could bring them into one view. But the purpose of the present note does not require this; and there are parts of the subject to which we shall again have occasion to refer. We need only now observe that these remarkable analogies between the patriarchal (or say the Hebrew) and Druidical religions are late discoveries of our own day, but the antiquity and wisdom of the Druidical religion, and its conformities with that of the Jews, were adduced so long ago as the time of Celsus in opposition to what that writer was pleased to consider the novelties of the gospel.

(7) Portable Fires, p. 63.—The text offers the first occasion on which a fire for use is directly mentioned. It is not easy to see why the fire should have been carried to the spot where it was to be used, instead of being kindled there. Were the difficulties in kindling a new fire in that early age so great that it was more convenient to carry a fire from one place to another? Some think it possible that it was not in those days considered right to kindle a fire on an altar but from the fire of another altar, and that, for this

reason, this fire had been brought all the way from the altar at Beersheba; but this would imply that the fires upon the patriarchal altars were kept up constantly, which we very much more than doubt. We are not inclined to suppose that the fire was brought from Beersheba at all; but rather conceive that a halt had lately been made, when a fire had, as usual, been kindled, either for warmth (if the halt had been for the night*), or to dress their victuals; and that when they left, Abraham, knowing the remaining distance to be inconsiderable, judged it best to take some of the live embers with him. The Orientals at this day are much in the habit of carrying fires about in vessels for various purposes; and this is sometimes for a whole day, and from day to day during a journey: but this is chiefly in Persia, to supply the servant with the means of lighting his master's pipe when required, in which case the fire is contained in a small vessel of iron, which hangs by a chain from the servant's saddle to about two feet from the ground. In this case as in that of Abraham, our habits would lead us to say, "How much easier it would be to kindle a fire at once, when needed, than to bear it about all day:" but in practice, and with the bad igniting apparatus which the Orientals employ, it is not found to be so. The vessels in which fire is carried may be of different shapes and sizes, according to the use for which it is required; but in general they are small, and, as in the cited case, borne suspended by a chain. Our itinerant tinkers (who, as being for the most part gipsies, are of Eastern origin) carry about their fires much in the same fashion.

(8) THE ISHMAELITES, p. 69.—We know not whence the strange opinion arose that the whole Arabian nation is descended from Ishmael, and that, consequently, the names of the Ishmaelites and Arabs are co-extensive, unless from the Chaldee and Arabic paraphrasts, and from other Jewish writers, whose historical authority, at all times of the least possible value, becomes a perfect nullity when open to any obvious influence, such as the wish to represent Abraham as the father of so great and wide-spread a nation as the Arabians. The whole testimony of the Oriental writers, and all the inferences deducible from the sacred narrative, are opposed to this conclusion. The Arabians have a history anterior to Ishmael; and it would be preposterous to suppose that Arabia, even to its deserts, was not occupied before his time.

* The Bedouins never, unless under very peculiar circumstances, halt for a night without kindling a fire, even in summer.

According to the Arabian writers, Arabia was ocucpied a few generations after the Flood by the successive settlement within it of variously descended tribes, all of whom ultimately gave way to the races from which the present Arabs claim to be descended, either from being destroyed by them or lost in them. These latter proceed from two stocks, of which the most ancient is that of Kahtan, the same who is in the Bible called Joktan, a son of Eber; and the other that of Adnan, who descended in a direct line from Ishmael. To the posterity of the former is given the distinguishing title of eminence, *al Arab al Araba*,* that is, the genuine or pure Arabs; while those of Ishmael receive that of *al Arab al Mostáreba*, meaning naturalized or mixed Arabs. But some writers, who wish to be more precise, apply the first and most honourable title to the more ancient and lost tribes to which we have alluded, while the descendants of Kahtan obtained the name of *Motareba*, which likewise signifies mixed Arabs, though in a nearer degree than *Mostáreba;* those who acknowledged Ishmael for their ancestor (through Adnan) being the more distant graft. Considering the origin of Ishmael, it is no wonder that those supposed to be descended from him should have no claim to be admitted as pure Arabs; but as he is alleged to have contracted an alliance with the Jorhamites,† who possessed Hejaz, by marrying the daughter of their emir Modâd, whence, and by subsequent intermarriages his descendants became blended with them into one nation, their claim to be regarded as Mostáreba is beyond dispute.

There is considerable uncertainty in the descents from Ishmael to Adnan, which is the reason why the Arabs have seldom attempted to trace their genealogies higher than the latter, whom they, therefore, look upon as the founder of their tribes. The account of this Adnan does not commence, however, till 122 B.C.; so that the uncertainties extend over a period of about 1800 years. This is a very awful circumstance at the first view, but the line of descent is not compromised by it, notwithstanding. The uncertainties refer merely to the numbers and names of the generations which fill the interval, and arise from the contracted manner in which genealogies, extending over a long series of ages, were necessarily kept. Thus they do not specify all the generations from A to Z, in this way:—"Z, the son of Y; Y, the son of X; X, the son of W," and so on up to A: but knowing it to be a matter of perfect notoriety and unquestionable truth

* Equivalent to "A Hebrew of the Hebrews" among the Jews.

† Descended from Jorham, a son of Kahtan.

that Z is descended from some eminent ancestor, say S, and that it is equally notorious and unquestionable that the remote ancestor of this S was M, and that M was descended from G, and G from A,—they may omit the intermediate ancestors, through whom Z descended from S, and S from M, and M from G, and G from A, and state the matter thus:—" Z, the son of S, the son of M, the son of G, the son of A ; and thus it may occur that not only the names but even the numbers of the generations between A and Z may, in the course of time, become involved in great uncertainty through their not being given in detail in the genealogies, while the truth yet remains certain and unquestionable, that Z is descended from A through G, M, and S. Hence it is not questioned that Adnan is descended from Ishmael, and a certain number, eight or ten, of illustrious names are mentioned to mark out the line of descent, while the names of the mass of intermediate ancestors is lost, and even the numbers of their generations may be a subject of fair dispute without the main question being touched. It is, therefore, surprising to see some able writers so much in the dark as to imagine that, because the Arabian writers give us only some eight or ten names to mark the line of descent, they were absurd enough to suppose that that eight or ten generations sufficed to cover the long interval between Ishmael and Adnan. We have dwelt on this subject the rather because this Arabian manner of proceeding suffices to clear up some difficulties which the Hebrew genealogies offer.

It must not be inferred that the Arabs undervalue the descent from Ishmael in comparison with that from Kahtan, on account of their applying to it a less honourable designation. This is by no means the case; for, on the contrary, they set a high value, like the Jews, on the privilege of being descended from Abraham; and this distinction is, in the eyes of the modern Arabs, greatly enhanced by the circumstance that Mohammed belonged to this race, and gloried in being descended from Ishmael and Abraham.

Of the personal history of Ishmael the Arabians give a highly *embellished* account, which it is not necessary in this place to repeat. In those circumstances which seem most entitled to consideration, as not incompatible with his Scriptural history, we are somewhat inclined to suspect that they apply to him actions and events which really belong, if they are at all real, to some of his descendants. For instance, that Ishmael ever was in Hejaz, or formed any important connections there, seems to us very doubtful; but there is nothing in this that might not be very probably true of one of his descendants, after the tribe had increased, and had formed alliances among the Arabs of the Kahtan races. We, therefore, attach little weight to the statement of his marriage to the daughter of the king of the Jorhamites, though we should not be prepared to doubt it merely on the ground that the Scripture tells us that he married an Egyptian woman, since his Arabian wife might have been the second. In fact, much that the Arabians tell us about Ishmael proceeds on the grievous misconception that Abraham himself lived in Hejaz, and that there all the events of his later history took place.

The account of the descent of numerous Arabian tribes from Ishmael is not open to the same doubts or difficulty, and is, indeed, so clear in itself, and so universally acknowledged, that the object of the present note has not been to prove this, but to indicate the historical certainty that *all* the Arabians could not, and did not, claim to be descended from him.

(9) Greediness of Uncivilized Men, p. 70.—There is nothing better calculated to impress the mind with a due sense of the true dignity which *civilization* confers upon the human character, than a little practical acquaintance with uncivilized or savage races. The beast of prey sees no other object in existence than to seek food, to gorge himself with it, if he finds enough for the purpose, and to sleep till that which he has eaten is digested. Thus, also, it is with such people; and it is offensive to the civilized man to have these mere animal aims and ends of existence pressed constantly upon his notice. We hear of the abstemiousness of the Bedouin, for instance; and he may be abstemious from necessity, but he cannot be temperate. While there is anything for him to eat, he will eat for ever; and when all is gone, he can remain longer in a starving condition—in this also like a beast of prey—than can the civilized man, who is accustomed to a regularly recurring and temperate meal, and who thinks little or nothing of his food except when he actually takes it. But among the people of whom we speak, every one seems to be at all times in a condition to eat voraciously of whatever he can obtain; the safest way to his heart is through his stomach; there is nothing he will not do for those who fill him with good cheer, nothing he will not undertake for the prospect of an indulgence to his appetite before him; and we are well persuaded that there are few who would resist the temptation of sacrificing almost any amount of reversionary benefit for the present enjoyment of a mess of pottage.

We find a passage in Mr. Stephens' "Incidents of Travel" strikingly confirmatory of these observations, and with reference to the same people (the Bedouins), whom we have had more particularly in view, he says, "Their temperance and frugality are from necessity, not from choice; for in their nature they are gluttonous, and will eat at any time till they are gorged of whatever they can get, and then lie down and sleep like brutes. I have sometimes amused myself with trying the variety of their appetites, and I never knew them refuse anything that could be eaten. Their stomach was literally their god, and the only chance of doing anything with them was by first making it a grateful offering. Instead of scorning luxuries, they would eat sugar as boys do sugar-candy; and I am very sure that if they could have got pound-cake, they would never have eaten their own coarse bread."

These things are, however, not peculiar to the Bedouins, but belong to all people till they become civilized Such people live only for the present. Enlarged forethought is exclusively the virtue of civilization, and we are thoroughly persuaded that among the uncivilized people of different countries there would be thousands of voluntary candidates for sacrifice upon the altars, if it were well understood that, as among the ancient Gauls, the victim would, for a whole year previously, be fed on the choicest dainties of the land.

By the way, it seems to us that not only do these observations bear on and illustrate the conduct of Esau, but that of Isaac himself. *He* "loved Esau *because* he did eat of his venison;" and the whole account of the *blessing* is rendered painful to us by its being so much mixed up with the history of "the savoury meat which he loved," and through which his whole plan for blessing Esau was marred. But all this would appear wonderfully natural to a Bedouin; and, indeed, the introduction into the sacred narrative of characteristics not in themselves amiable, but so true to nature and circumstances, must bring strong evidence of its verity to every unprejudiced mind.

([10]) ISAAC'S BLESSING, p. 70.—That the blessing which Rebekah and Jacob were so anxious to obtain, and to obtain which was the object of their strange plots and devices, was rather the heirship of the promises than of the temporal preferences which were held to be the due of the firstborn, is confirmed in our minds by the following considerations, which we copy from Dr. Hales.

"That their principal object was the spiritual blessing, and not the temporal, was shown by the event. For Jacob afterwards reverenced Esau, as his elder brother, and insisted upon Esau's accepting a present from his hand, in token of submission; Esau also appears to have possessed himself of his father's property during Jacob's long exile; 1. from his coming to meet him, on his return homeward, with so large a retinue as 400 men; 2. from his saying '*he had enough*,' when he wished to decline Jacob's present; 3. from Jacob's making no claim upon him for the division of the patrimony, saying that *he* also *had enough;* and, 4. from Esau's removal to Mount Seir with all his substance, which he had gotten in the land of Canaan; thus relinquishing to his brother's family all *future* title to the possession of that land by establishing himself elsewhere. Gen. xxxiii. 3—14, xxxvi. 6, 7.*

([11]) CULTIVATION BY NOMADES, p. 71.—Whenever we seek a comparison for the situation which the pastoral patriarchs occupied in Palestine, we find nothing that seems to us so strictly analogous as the position of the Tartar tribes in Persia. Cultivation is never practised by the purely desert nomades; but when pastoral tribes wander in the plains and free pastures of a settled country, there are many circumstances which may lead them, in a thinly-peopled district, to turn their attention to agriculture, with the view of raising such produce as they require for their own subsistence; and this is particularly the case when their range is limited to a district in which the winters are attended with any considerable degree of cold. Under such circumstances the Eelauts in Persia build villages of mud—well known as "Tartar villages,"—and cultivate the surrounding soil. They retire to these villages on the approach of winter, and when summer draws near, they betake themselves to the plains, which form the summer pasture-grounds of their flocks, and live there in tents, but leave behind them at the village a sufficient number of hands to attend to their fields, and gather in the produce in its season. They have evidently taken a first step towards exchanging the condition of the shepherd for that of the cultivator.

We do not offer this as a precise resemblance of the usage into which the Hebrew patriarchs fell; but it offers some illustration of this mixed condition, and suggests the nearest analogy which can, perhaps, be found. The patriarchs certainly did not live in villages or houses; but even this appears to have been the case with the family stock which remained in Mesopotamia, to whose condition

* 'Analysis of Chronology,' ii. 133.

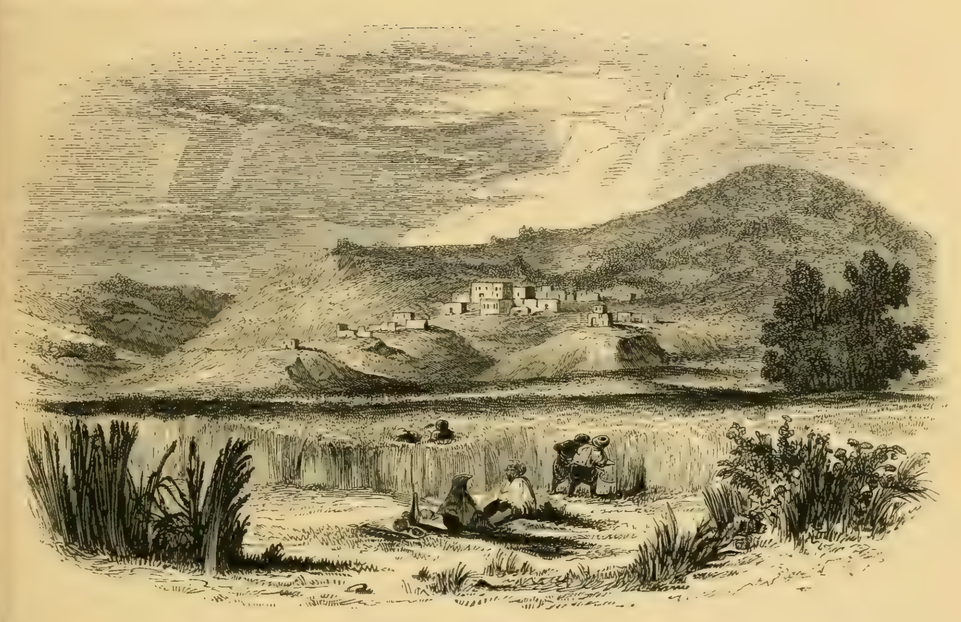
the analogy may, perhaps, be still more close than to that of the patriarchs in Canaan.

([12]) Beersheba, p. 72.—In the last number (for April, 1839) of the 'American Biblical Repository,' we have just had the great satisfaction of perusing a very valuable and interesting 'Report of Travels in Palestine and the Adjacent Regions, in 1838; *undertaken for the Illustration of Biblical Geography* by the Rev. Prof. E. Robinson and Rev. E. Smith;' in which we find a notice of the discovery of the site of Beersheba, about thirty miles to the south of Hebron. Our readers will not fail to be gratified at being enabled to obtain the view, conveyed in the following description, of a place of such great interest in the history of the patriarchs:—

"After crossing another elevated plateau, the character of the surface was again changed. We came upon an open rolling country; all around were swelling hills, covered in ordinary seasons with grass and rich pasturage, though now arid and parched with drought. We now came to Wady Lebu; and on the north side of its water-course we had the satisfaction of discovering the site of ancient Beersheba, the celebrated border city of Palestine, still bearing in Arabic the name of Bir Seba. Near the water-course are two circular wells of excellent water, nearly forty feet deep. They are both surrounded with drinking troughs of stone, for the use of camels and flocks; such as doubtless were used of old for the flocks that then fed on the adjacent hills. Ascending the low hills north of the wells, we found them strewed with the ruins of former habitations,—the foundations of which are distinctly to be traced. These ruins extend over a space of half a mile long by a quarter of a mile broad. Here, then, is the place where Abraham and Isaac and Jacob often lived! Here Samuel made his sons judges; and from here Elijah wandered out into the southern desert, and sat down under the *rethem*, or shrub of broom, just as our Arabs sat down under it every day and every night. Over these swelling hills the flocks of the patriarchs roved by thousands: we now only found a few camels, asses, and goats."

CHAPTER IV.

JACOB.



[Harvest in Palestine. Cana.]

Jacob proceeded on his long journey to Mesopotamia, making, in the first place, for the fords of the Jordan, which river his course obliged him to cross. On the second or third evening * he arrived in the neighbourhood of a town which bore the name of Luz, on account of the numerous almond-trees which grew there; and here he determined to spend the night.

Having procured from the neighbouring town such refreshments (including oil) as he needed for his present relief and for his use in the morning, he lay down to rest, placing a stone under his head for a pillow. (1) He appears to have been in a dejected state of mind, occasioned by the recent separation from his mother and father, the prospect of the toilsome journey before him, and the uncertainties of his future lot. But now he was cheered by a dream which conveyed to him a lively notion of the watchful providence of God, and assured him of the Divine protection. He beheld the similitude of a ladder, which seemed to connect earth with heaven; and on this ladder he saw the angels of God descending and ascending, proceeding on and returning from the missions entrusted to them by One who appeared above, and who, at last, spoke to Jacob himself, and, after announcing himself as the Jehovah of his fathers, Abraham and Isaac, proceeded to recognize him as the heir of the promises, and to renew to him, in express terms, the covenant made with Abraham; and then, mercifully compassionating his depressed state and forlorn condition, the Divine vision added,—"And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into

* The distance was about 60 miles, and this could not be travelled in less than two days, and might take three. Thirty miles is considered a good day's journey for even a mounted traveller.

this land: for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of." Jacob, who had not before been favoured with any manifestations of that Jehovah of whose greatness and goodness, and of whose especial regard for their race, he had often heard Abraham and Isaac speak, awoke with deep awe, and exclaimed, "Surely Jehovah is in this place, and I knew it not." And then he added, with some terror, "How dreadful is this place! Surely this is none other than the house of God, and this the gate of heaven." In allusion to what he said on this occasion, the place was thenceforward called Bethel [*the house of God*] by himself and his descendants, in which name the more ancient one of Luz was soon lost. ([2])

Jacob arose early in the morning, and his first act was to set up, or plant on one of its ends, the stone which had served him for a bolster. Upon the top of this he poured some of his oil, and in doing so, vowed a remarkable and characteristic vow which cannot be adequately represented but in its own language :—"If God will indeed be with me, and will keep me in the way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on, so that I may return to my father's house in peace,—then shall Jehovah be my God; and *this stone which I have set up for a pillar shall be God's house:* and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee." The allusion to the meaning with which the stone was set up is very interesting, as it offers the first historical trace of a custom of placing erect stones as memorials and evidences of different events and actions,—of victories, providences, vows, contracts, boundaries, and sepulchres. In some of these meanings—and more especially as votive and sepulchral memorials—this old patriarchal custom exists everywhere to this day, either in actual usage or in traces of one extinct; and hence, although the Druids preserved this custom also, it cannot be called druidical,* distinctively, like some other of the old Hebrew usages concerning stones, which we find at a later day almost confined to the Druids.

Jacob's declared intention of devoting to God a tenth of the substance which might be given to him, probably means that he would expend that proportion in the building of altars, in offering sacrifices, and in the performance of such other acts, if any, in which the patriarchal religion allowed men to consider that they rendered God service.

Jacob proceeded on his journey, and in due time arrived at the famous old well of Charran, where Eliezer had first seen Rebekah. Here he found some shepherds of that place waiting with their flocks. Being himself well versed in all the usages of pastoral life, he was struck that they did not at once water their flocks; but on inquiring the reason, was told that different flocks were entitled to water from that well, and that the well could not be opened till they were all on the ground, or rather, till all the shepherds of those flocks were present. Continuing to talk with them, he learned that they knew Laban, that he was well, and that his home flock was kept by his daughter Rachel, for whose presence they were then actually waiting before they opened the well. While they were thus in talk, Rachel came with her sheep, and the kind stranger—the forlorn son of a wealthy house—hastened to render a mark of civility and attention which was probably not less acceptable to her than were the ornaments of gold which her aunt had received from his father's servant at that place; with the ease of an accomplished shepherd, he removed the stone from the mouth of the well and watered her flock for her; and when he had done this, he drew near to her and kissed her, and told her, with many tears, that he was her own cousin, the son of Rebekah, her aunt. Rachel ran to bear these tidings to her father, who instantly hastened to meet his sister's son, and embraced him, and kissed him, and brought him into the house. The reception which Laban gave to one who came in so humble a guise, raises the generally unamiable and self-seeking character of Rebekah's brother considerably in our esteem, and satisfies us that, within certain limits—which soon enough appear,—he wished to show all possible kindness and just treatment to Jacob. His tone did not alter when he understood how matters really stood with Rebekah's son: "Surely thou art my bone, and my flesh," was his emphatic answer to his

* As we shall have occasion to use this word, to avoid the necessity of circumlocution, we may as well intimate at once that, although in strict propriety it could not be so used, we shall employ it to express those customs of the old Hebrews which the druidical religion preserved in a long subsequent age.

nephew's statement, which probably concluded with an intimation that Isaac did not know there was any other object in Jacob's journey than to obtain a wife from the house of Nahor.

Among people of such habits of life as we are now describing, it would be a reproach to any man, when on a visit, not to take his full share in the occupations and pursuits of the family; and the estimation in which he is held will be proportioned to the disposition and power which he manifests of making himself useful to his friends. Jacob accordingly exerted himself, during the first month of his stay, with such good effect as made a strong impression upon his uncle, who was too shrewd a man not to perceive that, probably from his having spent all his life in tents, and latterly in active superintendence of his father's flocks, Jacob had such a very superior knowledge of pastoral affairs as would render his services of much value. Therefore, at the end of the month, he spoke to him, observing that since he seemed likely to make some stay, he was unwilling to take advantage of their relationship to receive the benefit of his assistance without price; but was anxious to make him whatever recompense he desired. Now Jacob during his stay had not been unobservant of Laban's two daughters. The eldest of them, Leah, was afflicted with a disorder in her eyes, but seems in other respects to have been an agreeable and sensible woman. The other, Rachel, whom he had first seen at the well, was very beautiful, and as she participated in the care of the flock, there were more points of sympathy between her and Jacob, and he saw more of her than of Leah, who, as the eldest daughter, was much engaged in the household affairs. On all these grounds it was natural that the heart of Jacob preferred Rachel; indeed, he loved her deeply.

To the fair, and even liberal proposal of Laban, his nephew therefore made answer, that he only desired that Rachel might be given to him for wife; and that, seeing he had not wherewith to pay for her the price * which custom required, he was willing to give his services for seven years, as an equivalent. Laban readily closed with this proposal; and the arrangement thus made, is, to this day, not unusual in Syria with young men who have nothing but their services to offer the family from which they desire a wife.

Usage required that a month should pass between the formation and completion of such an agreement; and when the month was expired, Jacob demanded his wife. On this, Laban assembled a large party of his friends, to keep the wedding-feast, which, it seems, even at this early date, lasted during a week. On the first evening, Laban led his veiled daughter to the chamber of her husband, which was left in darkness: thus it was not until the morning that Jacob discovered that the wily Laban, instead of giving him his beloved Rachel, had brought him his less favoured daughter, Leah. This was enough to throw a meeker man than Jacob into a passion; but, on being reproached with his conduct, Laban coolly answered, that it was not the custom of the country to give the younger daughter in marriage before the elder. This is so conformable to Oriental ideas, that it is very likely to have been true; but it was his duty to have told this to his nephew when the agreement was made, instead of forcing upon him, for a wife, a woman he did not wish to marry, in the place of one whom he truly loved. But his real object was to get rid first of his least attractive daughter, as well as to secure a longer claim upon the valued services of his sister's son. Accordingly he added, that, when he had completed the matrimonial week due to Leah, there would be no objection to his taking Rachel also, provided he would undertake to serve another seven years for her sake. Circumstanced as he was by the guile of Laban, Jacob was compelled to agree to this; and we are touchingly told that the further seven years which he served for Rachel, "seemed to him but as a few days, for the love he had to her."

To Jacob's former indifference towards Leah, was now added the disgust which her evident participation in the fraud practised upon him was calculated to inspire. But it turned out that Leah had a ground of exultation over her favoured rival, in the fact that she bore four sons to her husband, while her sister was barren. Finding this to be the case, Rachel bethought herself of giving to Jacob her handmaid, named Bilhah, whom she had received from her father on her marriage, under the notion that the children which this woman might bear would be counted as hers. It will be remembered that Sarah had given her handmaid, Hagar, to

* Lest any reader should be offended at the use of this word, we may mention that *this* is the correct and formal term for the consideration which the bridegroom is obliged to make to the family from which he takes a daughter or sister.

Abraham, under a similar idea. The plan so far succeeded, that Bilhah became the mother of two sons, both of whom received from Rachel names expressive of her exultation. Leah, finding how her sister's plan answered, and that she had herself ceased to bear children, persuaded Jacob to take also *her* handmaid, Zilpah, and by her he had two sons; then Leah herself recommenced bearing, and had two sons and a daughter. At last the cries of Rachel herself were heard in heaven; her womb was opened, and she conceived, and bare a son—Joseph, the favoured and beautiful, who fills so large a place in the history of the patriarchs. Thus the fourteen years passed away, during which Jacob must have been much disturbed by the bickerings and heart-burnings of his wives; and at the end of which he found himself the father of eleven sons and a daughter.*

Jacob's full term of service being now expired, he applied to Laban for leave to return to the land of Canaan with his wives and children. But Laban begged him to prolong his stay, "for I have found by experience," said he, "that Jehovah hath blessed me for thy sake." This gave Jacob the opportunity of hinting that he fully knew the value of his own services to his uncle, whom he reminded of the comparatively small extent of his pastoral property on his own arrival, and how amazingly it had since been increased—not, indeed, through his exertions, though nothing had been wanting on his part,—but through the Lord's blessing on his account. He added that it was now become his duty to provide for his own house also. In answer to this, Laban intimated his willingness to grant him whatever remuneration for his future services he might himself require. Jacob then made the extraordinary proposal that, seeing shepherds were usually paid for their services from the produce of the flock, his payment should consist of all the dark sheep and all the party-coloured goats which might hereafter be born in the flocks under his care, after all the animals so coloured in the existing flock were separated and committed to other hands. As the proportion of animals of such colours is in all cases small in a flock of Western Asia, and as the ordinary physical chances for the propagation of those colours seemed to be diminished by the proposed separation, Laban readily agreed to a plan which seemed so advantageous to himself. He made the stipulated separation, and gave the separated flock to the charge of his sons, directing them to keep at three days' distance from the pastures which Jacob frequented.

But Laban had soon occasion to find, if he had not found it before, that his nephew was fully a match for himself in craft. The terms of the agreement, as Laban understood them, must have been, that hazard, operating with certain drawbacks, would adequately remunerate Jacob for his care of the flock of which his uncle was the proprietor. The intention, therefore, with which Rebekah's son made his proposal, as indicated by its subsequent execution, speaks far more in behalf of his superior knowledge of the shepherd's art, and is much more in unison with his early operations upon Esau and upon his own father, than it is moral, or, in any sense, honest. His profound knowledge of the habits of the animals which form the pastor's wealth, put him in possession of the fact, that the powerful thirst which, in those warm climates, the animals necessarily feel by the time they are brought to the wells for water, makes the time of drinking one of the highest excitement to them, as manifested by the disposition which, in the proper season, they then show to the act of propagating their kind. This state of excitement lays their imaginations open—so to speak—to receive impressions from the slightest and apparently the most inadequate causes; and that when the impression has been received, it may operate upon the colour of the issue of those animals in which colour varies, few physiologists will question. To avail himself of his knowledge of these facts, Jacob took rods of the poplar, hazel, and plane, and peeled white streaks in them by laying bare the whiteness of the rods. Thus prepared, he set them in the troughs from which the flocks were watered; and the unusual appearance at that well-known and favourite place could not fail to draw their attention strongly at that most exciting time—when they drank and also coupled—which we have indicated. The result was, that the

* It may be useful to add here their names, with the years of their birth (stated with reference to the age of their father) annexed, as settled by Dr. Hales, that the reader may be clearly aware of their relative ages. By Leah—Reuben, 78, Simeon, 80, Levi, 82, Judah, 83; by Bilhah—Dan, 84, Naphtali, 85; by Zilpah—Gad, 86, Asher, 87; by Leah again—Issachar, 88, Zebulon, 89, Dinah, 90; by Rachel—Joseph, 91, Benjamin, 104. We add the name of Benjamin to complete the list, though he was not born till some years after the date at which we are now arrived.

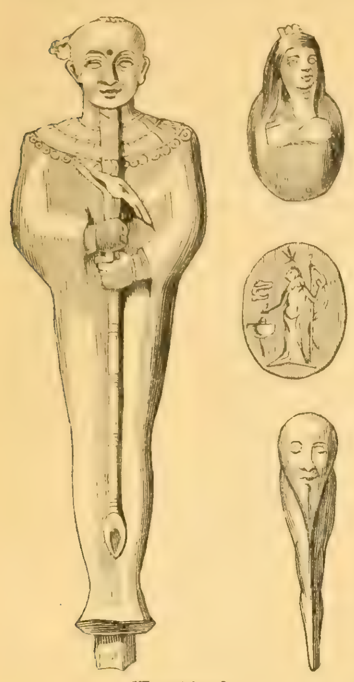
young which were conceived under such circumstances were of the colours which Jacob required, and which he was entitled to set apart as his own property; and as he only tried this operation upon the stronger animals of the flock, leaving the weak ones to the course of nature, it happened that not only did his share become very large, but the stronger animals of the flock were his, and the weaker Laban's.

This transaction has been a subject of various and warm discussion. The natural adequacy of the cause to produce the assigned effect has been denied by parties entirely opposed to each other,—by sceptics, who endeavour to throw doubt on the truth of the scriptural narrative, and by truly pious persons, who believe that the result proceeded from a miraculous interposition of Divine power, and that the operations were in themselves nothing but as sanctified and *directed* by God. To both parties we would say, that we much doubt whether they and the authorities on which they depend knew so much of the nature of sheep and goats as did Jacob, who for nearly a century had lived constantly among the flocks; and that a denial ought to be made with diffidence which is founded on observations made in European countries, where, for the most part, the animals themselves are so differently circumstanced, and their natural characteristics less actively developed than under the skies of Syria and Mesopotamia, and in the broad and warm plains in which they feed, and under the modes of treatment to which they are subject there. And to the latter we would beg to remark, that we are not told that God did direct Jacob to take this course; and the deep reverence with which we regard that great and holy name makes us shrink with intense repugnance from such attempts to exonerate Jacob at the expense of making Him a party in this most fraudulent proceeding. It is by such things as this—by attempts to clear the characters of the eminent persons of Biblical history from all stain, by connecting the Divine sanction with their most weak or culpable actions—that more real and vital injury has been done to the cause of truth than by all the sneers and insinuations which avowed scorners of revelation ever uttered. For ourselves, this proceeding seems to bear, from beginning to end, the aspect of a complicated and well-planned piece of dishonesty. The proposal was Jacob's own, when Laban left him the choice of his own terms; and the very singularity of it suggests that he was well aware that he possessed the means of obtaining a far greater benefit from it than any one else could have supposed likely, or than would have been possible under the operation of ordinary circumstances; and the real dishonesty of employing artificial means for his purpose, is greatly enhanced by his measure for securing all the stronger animals for himself, and leaving the weak to the original owner of the flock. The real excuse for Jacob, and for many of the unseemly actions into which some most venerable persons in the Hebrew history did at times fall, lies in this—first, that those eminent persons whom we fondly picture to ourselves as somewhat more than men, were men only, and often, as in themselves, very weak men; and, secondly, that they were Orientals;—for it must not be concealed, that in the East, however pure may be the religious principle, and lofty the religious feeling, and however strong the pride of honour, there is now, and ever has been, such a weakness of the moral sense as is not without much pain and difficulty comprehended by those who have from infancy breathed in a moral atmosphere which Christianity has purified, and which, by its insensible influences, keeps in a state of moral healthiness even those who have not found therein the breath of life.

We are thoroughly convinced that, at the present day, there are, in Western Asia, and, least of all among the Bedouins, very few men, even among persons of character and station, who would not to the end of their lives make their boast of such splendid exploits in overreaching as those which passed between Laban and Jacob. They would be incapable of seeing anything more in them than evidences of their own ability and cleverness; and their auditors, labouring under the same incapacity, would, to a man, listen with deep interest and admiration. The story of Laban's cheating Jacob into taking the wrong wife would be received with rapture; and Jacob himself would be regarded rather with contempt than pity, until the story of his dealings with the sheep and goats intrusted to his care, which would not fail to be heard with shouts of delight, should turn the scale of admiration in his favour.

Now, from this time forward, Jacob "increased exceedingly," and in the course of about six years, he "had much cattle, and men-servants, and women-servants, and camels, and

asses." This prosperity excited the envy of Laban's family, and his sons were heard to say, "Jacob hath taken away all that was our father's; and of that which was our father's hath he gotten all this glory." Laban, also, as might be expected, looked much less pleasant than in former times. Jacob, therefore, began to think it high time for him to return to the land of Canaan; and any doubts on the subject were removed by a Divine command to that effect. As he suspected that Laban would not let him withdraw unmolested with all the substance he had acquired, he resolved to go away without notice; and as his uncle was absent at a sheep-shearing, the opportunity was too favourable to be neglected. But first he consulted his wives, calling them forth into the fields, that they might not be overheard. He stated the matter fully to them, and had the satisfaction of finding that they entered entirely into his views. He therefore hastened his preparations for departure, in the course of which Rachel managed to secrete the small superstitious images, called Teraphim,(3) which belonged to her father. This she did, most probably, for the purpose of continuing in the strange land to which she was going, that superstitious use of them, on reference to them, in which she had been brought up.



[Teraphim ?]

All being ready, Jacob mounted his wives and children upon camels, and sped away toward the Euphrates with his flocks and herds, and all his substance. Having crossed the great river, he pursued his way for several days, until he arrived at the mountains of Gilead, where he pitched his tent, and resolved to spend the time usually allotted to rest.



[Halt on a Journey.]

Laban did not hear of Jacob's flight until the third day after he started; but no sooner did he learn it, than he called together the men of his family and household, and commenced a rapid pursuit. That he persisted in this pursuit for seven days, during which he traversed all the distance from Chairan to the mountains of Gilead, shows the inveteracy of his purpose, which, it seems, was to take from Jacob all the property with which he had departed. But the night before he overtook the fugitive in Gilead, God appeared to him in a dream, and warned him, saying, "Take heed that thou speak not unto Jacob either good or bad." This changed his purpose entirely; for such an injunction as this, even Laban dared not disobey; but being now, as he knew, so near to his fugitive son-in-law and daughters, he determined still to follow and seek an interview with them.

When they met, some strong recrimination passed between Laban and Jacob. The former professed especial indignation that his daughters had been hurried away, "like captives taken with the sword," and that no opportunity had been allowed him of giving one farewell kiss to them and their children, and of sending them away with music and with songs. And after declaring that only the vision of the past night prevented him from making use of the power he possessed, he added, with some heat, "And now though thou wouldest needs be gone, because thou sore longedst after thy father's house, yet wherefore hast thou stolen my gods?" Jacob, who was really ignorant of Rachel's theft, disavowed all knowledge of his teraphim, and declared that any one in whose possession they were found should be put to death. He also told Laban to go with his friends and make a strict search everywhere, to convince himself that there was nothing in the camp which he could justly claim for his own. His uncle took him at his word, and proceeded to make a very strict search. It seems that tents had only been pitched for the accommodation of the women and children, and that each of Jacob's wives had her separate tent. Laban went into each of them; but as he entered that of Rachel the last, she had an opportunity of hiding the teraphim under the pack of her camel, and seated herself upon it, as Bedouin women often do when enjoying rest on a journey: and when her father entered, she, with much more art than decorum, accounted for not rising to receive him, by such a statement as to her condition, as she knew would not only excuse her in that, but would induce him speedily to leave her tent. The plan answered; and Laban returned with a confession that he was unable to find that for which he sought. On this, Jacob, who before had been more disposed to excuse than vindicate his retreat, took a high tone in his turn. He stated how long and faithfully he had served Laban—fourteen years for his two daughters, and six years for his cattle, and alleged that his wages had several times been altered, when it was found that the agreed mode of payment proved more productive than had been foreseen. There are many traits in the preceding statement illustrative of the manners of that age and state of life; and one further passage is too descriptive of the condition and duties of an eastern shepherd to be other than literally given:—"That was torn of beasts," Jacob said, "I brought not unto thee: I bare the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether it was stolen by day, or stolen by night. Thus was I; in the day the drought consumed me and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes." Laban did not attempt to answer; but gave a change to the subject by saying, that although he considered all he saw to be his, yet, as a father, he had no desire to interfere with the prosperity of his daughters and their children. He then proposed that they should enter into a covenant of future peace; and the mode in which it was formed and established will seem singularly interesting to those who inquire into old usages and the ideas connected with them—particularly those to which the name of Druidical has been assigned. Jacob, as he had done at Bethel, set up a tall stone on its end; and he also directed his people to collect large stones to form a heap. They all sat down then, and ate beside or upon this heap; it being a very early and still subsisting custom for those who entered into a friendly covenant to eat and drink together. And as it was also customary to impose significant and commemorative names upon the stony memorials which were erected on such occasions, Laban, in his Syriac dialect, imposed the name of Jegar-sahadutha upon the heap; and Jacob called it Galeed, both of which names have the same meaning of, THE WITNESS HEAP; but to the erect stone, the name of Mizpeh, THE WATCH, or WATCH-

tower was given. The significant application of these terms is derived from the manner in which they were employed by Laban. "This heap is witness," he said to Jacob, "between me and thee this day," and, with reference to the erected stone, "Jehovah watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another." After thus establishing these stony evidences, Laban, as the elder and superior party, continued to state the terms of the covenant; which were,—that Jacob should treat his daughters kindly,* *and not take any other wives besides them*, which last is a remarkable and significant stipulation which will not escape the reader's special notice. "Behold this heap," continued Laban, "and behold this pillar, which thou hast set up between me and thee, let this heap be a witness, and this pillar be a witness, that I will not pass over this heap, and this pillar to thee, and that thou wilt not pass over this heap and this pillar to me, *for harm.*" Laban then invoked the God of Abraham, and of Nahor, to judge between them; and Jacob called upon the Revered One of his father Isaac.

In the account of this transaction the idea of the erected stone and the heap being *witnesses* is so repeatedly produced, as clearly to evince their intention. These memorials belong to an age in which written bonds and contracts were unthought of, or, at least, were not in use among the people with whom the early Scriptural history makes us acquainted. If one in those days saw a stone or a number of stones arranged in such a manner as to suggest that they could not have been so placed by accident, he, knowing the custom of his own time and country, would be aware that the erection was intended as the monument of some covenant or vow, and he would respect it as a sacred thing, not to be disturbed or injured by him. The name which it bore would suggest the object of the erection, and if he desired further information, he would seldom fail to learn, from the people near the place or in the district, the traditionary account of the occasion on which the name had been imposed, and, consequently, the particulars of the transaction which the name and the erection were designed to commemorate. Thus these stones were more effective witnesses or memorials than the inhabitants of a highly civilized and densely-peopled country would, at the first view, be inclined to suppose.

Jacob slaughtered some sheep in the evening, and made a feast for Laban's party and his own. They spent the night together among these mountains, which thenceforward took the name of Gilead; and Laban set out in the morning on his return to Padan-Aram.

No sooner was Jacob relieved from the anxiety which the apprehended pursuit and actual appearance of Laban had occasioned, than his mind was much pressed by the recollection of the danger that might still be apprehended from the old resentments of his brother Esau, who, as he knew, had already established himself in the land of Seir, where he had become the chief of a powerful clan. But when he next formed his camp, after journeying among the mountains of Gilead, he received much encouragement from the vision of another great camp near his own, from which the angels of God approached towards him.† This he rightly interpreted as an assurance of the Divine protection, and memorialized the event by calling the place Mahanaim.‡ He then, with re-assured heart, proceeded to take such measures as the occasion seemed to require; and in all these his profound knowledge of character, and his consummate tact in acting upon it, are manifested with singular force. He determined to send messengers to announce his arrival. The distance, which could not well be *less* than 100 miles, would alone be a strong indication of his respect for, and his wish to stand well with, his brother; and he took great care that his messengers should not injure the effect of this measure by their mode of stating their errand, but instructed them in the form of words which they were to employ, every syllable of which was admirably calculated to assure Esau that he was very far from pretending to any personal superiority in virtue of his purchased birthright, but, on the contrary, looked up to his elder brother with great respect; and lest he should imagine that he was returning as a needy adventurer to claim a temporal inhe-

* This was superfluous as to Rachel; but Laban probably fancied that he had cause to fear least Leah should be treated with neglect or injury when absent from the protection which his presence afforded. But we think better of Jacob than Laban did, and believe him to have been incapable of treating Leah unkindly.

† To this the Psalmist appears to allude:—"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him." Psa. xxxiv. 7.

‡ The [two] camps.

ritance, and to devour the substance of their common father, the men were particularly charged to expatiate on the wealth which he had acquired in Padan-Aram.*

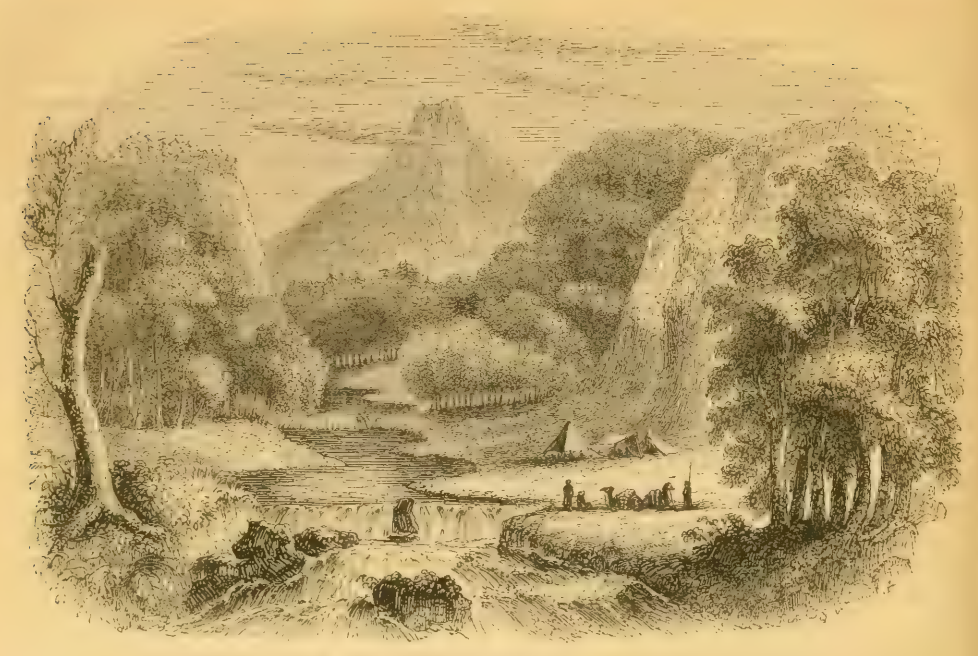
The messengers returned in due time without any verbal answer from Esau, but with the alarming announcement, " We came unto thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him."

Apprehending that Esau could not be coming with so formidable a force without the most hostile intentions, Jacob was much distressed at this intelligence. He cried to God for protection, in a most feeling and even pathetic address: and then, with his usual prudence and decision, proceeded to take such measures as the emergency seemed to require. In the first place he divided his company and possessions into two bands, between which he purposed to place a wide marching interval, that if any purposes of injury or vengeance should be manifested by Esau on meeting the foremost division, the chance of escape might be left open to that which remained behind, and which contained all that he held dearest and most valuable. Nor was he insensible of the effect which a preceding exhibition of presents might have in mollifying the heart of Esau, and in preparing him to receive his brother favourably. He therefore set apart a most noble present of 200 she-goats and 20 he-goats, 200 ewes and 20 rams, 30 milch camels with their colts, 40 heifers and 10 steers, 20 she-asses and 10 foals,—which list, while it suggests some idea of the large pastoral wealth which Jacob had acquired in Padan-Aram, is particularly valuable from the indication which it offers of the numerical proportions of the animals by which that wealth was composed. The milch camels and their colts were especially valuable. The animals thus selected—which, we may be sure, were the best and finest of Jacob's flocks and herds—were to go first of all, and were divided into droves with intervals between them, not only to make the more imposing display, but to afford opportunity for a succession of pacifying operations upon the temper of Esau. For the chief attendant with the first drove was carefully taught by Jacob how to deport himself and what to say, thus:—" When Esau, my brother, shall meet thee, and ask thee, saying, ' Whose servant art thou? and whither goest thou? and whose are these before thee?' Then thou shalt say, ' They are thy servant Jacob's: this is a present to my lord Esau; and behold he also is behind us.' " The leaders of the second and following droves were instructed to give exactly the same answers. This being arranged, they were ordered in the evening to cross the river Jabbok and proceed on their way. But Jacob himself remained still on the other side the river, with the reserved division, till some hours after, when, while it was still night, he arose, and passed all the party over that stream. When he was left alone on the other side, there came to him, in the form of a man, an angel, or rather, as Hosea (xii. 21) tells us, the same Divine person who had appeared to him at Bethel, and engaged for some time in a personal struggle with him. The stranger withheld himself from overcoming, or, indeed, allowed himself to seem the weaker party; but at last he stretched forth his hand and struck the hollow of Jacob's thigh, when the sinew instantly shrank; and thus he made his superhuman power known to the mortal with whom he strove. He then said, " Let me go; for the morning dawneth:" but Jacob, who at this critical moment of his life felt the need of strengthening and relief, answered, " I will not let thee go, unless thou bless me." On this the stranger told him that his name should be not only Jacob but ISRAEL,† because as a prince he had power with God, and with men also should prevail. He also blessed him, after refusing to acquaint him with his name. Thus Jacob was taught that, as he had not been conquered in this contest, so neither should he be overcome by the difficulties with which he was then threatened.

Jacob departed from that place as the sun rose, and found that he halted on his thigh which had been smitten; and in memory of this, even to our own day, his descendants have abstained

* Jacob thus charged his messengers:—" Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau,—' *Thy servant* Jacob saith thus: I have sojourned with Laban and stayed there until now. And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and men-servants, and women-servants; and I have sent to tell *my lord*, that I may find favour in thy sight.' " We are persuaded that the carefully guarded terms of respect, "thy servant," " my lord," were purposely intended to assuage the bitter feelings which seem to have been created in the mind of Esau by the knowledge that Isaac in the blessing intended for him, but which his brother had received, had made Jacob " lord over his brethren;" Isaac himself had told Esau that, in saying, " Behold, I have made him [Jacob] thy lord."

† One who has power with God.



[River Jabbok—Zerka.]

from eating the part which contains that sinew which, under the angel's hand, shrunk in the thigh of their forefather. How long his lameness lasted we are not told; but it seems more probable that it soon passed away, than that it continued to the end of his life, as some suppose.

Jacob had not proceeded far on his way, when he saw his brother approaching in the distance with his 400 men. He then hastened to separate his several wives and their children in such a manner as might most contribute to the safety of those who were dearest of all to him. The two handmaids and their children went on first, then, at some distance, Leah and her children, and, last of all, Rachel and Joseph. Jacob himself then went on before them all, and, as he came near enough, he walked forward and bowed himself very low, and then went on and bowed again, and this repeatedly—after the fashion in which Orientals still approach a superior—until they met. With what purposes Esau set out to meet Jacob no one can know. They may have been stern. But he had already passed the reverent harbingers of Jacob with their presents; and, now that his long absent brother approached thus humbly towards him, the heart of the sturdy hunter melted within him, all old resentments passed away, and, obeying the kindly impulses of his own generous nature, he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell upon his neck, and kissed him. And they both wept.

Afterwards, in answer to Esau's inquiries about the droves which he had met, Jacob very anxiously, and in all sincerity, pressed them upon his acceptance: for he seems not to have been yet relieved from his apprehensions; and he was well aware that for a superior to receive a present from an inferior, was a well-understood pledge of friendship, whereas to decline such an offering, or to return it after it had been received, was a common mark of dissatisfaction. Esau at first refused this costly gift, alleging that he already had enough; but, being much urged by Jacob, whose real feeling he probably penetrated and wished to relieve, he consented to take it.

Esau, taking it for granted that they were to go to Mount Seir, proposed to proceed on the journey. But this was no part of Jacob's plan, whose destination was the land of Canaan. He, therefore, without saying this, evaded compliance with his brother's proposal, by alleging the necessity which the presence of young children, and of the flocks and herds with young,

imposed upon him of proceeding very slowly; "For if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die." He, therefore, begged Esau to go on before, at his own speed, and promised to follow gently after. His brother yielded to the force of these reasons; but he still proposed to leave some of his men with him, to guide and protect him on the way. But Jacob, who dreaded such turbulent protectors, whose presence would also interfere with the execution of his plan, and who only wished himself fairly rid of the whole party, excused himself from this also, and at last Esau departed with all his people, fully expecting that Jacob would soon rejoin him in the land of Seir. But he was no sooner out of sight, than Jacob turned his course westward towards the Jordan.* Why he did not cross that river and enter the land of Canaan, and why he allowed several years to pass before he went to his father, we have no means of knowing. But when he arrived at a favourable situation, about five miles from the eastern bank of the Jordan, he made preparations for some stay there, by building for his own household one of the easily constructed houses of that time, with numerous sheds or booths for his people and cattle. From this circumstance the site took the name of Succoth, or *booths*, which was continued to a town built in a later day on that spot.



[Booths or Sheds.]

It is thought that Jacob did not remain at Succoth more than six months before he crossed the Jordan and entered the land of his future heritage. He arrived safely in the neighbourhood of Shechem, where he made his first stay in that land. As all the land about that city was by this time appropriated and had become of some value to the inhabitants, he was obliged to *purchase* the ground on which his camp was formed for the value of 100 lambs. (4) Here he built an altar, and called it the altar of El-elohe Israel:† and here, in long after ages,‡ was shown, and still is, a well which was dug by him and bore his name.

Here Jacob spent eight years in much prosperity, and greatly respected by the people of the land. By that time his only daughter Dinah was about fifteen years of age, when, in an evil hour, she went into the town, to see the finery of the women, during some festival which the Shechemites celebrated. On this occasion she was seen by Shechem, the son of Hamor the prince of the place; and he, being much struck by her great beauty, took her to his house, and defiled her by force. Yet after this "his soul still cleaved to her, and he loved her, and spoke kindly to her;" and, anxious to secure this treasure to himself, as well as to appease the resentment which the damsel's family would be sure to entertain, he begged his father to go and intercede with her's, that Dinah might become his wife.

Jacob was greatly distressed when he heard what had befallen his daughter, who still remained in Shechem's house. But his sons were then out with the cattle; and as, among the Bedouin races, when a father has children by different wives, the full brothers of a woman are, more than her father, the especial guardians of her welfare, her avengers if she is wronged, and her punishers if she errs, he made no answer to Hamor's proposals till his sons came home. They were greatly enraged when they heard of what had happened to their sister. But Hamor proceeded, with considerable address, to place his overtures in an advantageous light. He dwelt on the deep affection with which his son regarded Dinah, and did not forget to expatiate on the advantages which would result to them from so close an alliance with the

* Some think that Jacob really did intend to visit his brother in Seir when he promised to do so. But this is not the impression which any one spontaneously receives from the Scriptural narrative; and the more common notion, which we have embodied in the text, is certainly more in unison with Jacob's general character, and agrees well enough with all his dealings with Esau.

† The mighty God of Israel. ‡ John iv. 5.

Shechemites. They could intermarry, he said; and, while they might enrich themselves by establishing a free traffic in their pastoral produce with his people, they would be at perfect liberty to acquire whatever possessions in that town and district they desired. Shechem, who was himself present, was careful to add, that he would readily pay for the damsel whatever dowry or gift they might name, and this was, according to Bedouin habits, an exceedingly liberal proposal, and more likely to be satisfactory than all the rest put together. The brothers of Dinah affected to be appeased by these liberal offers: but in reality they nourished in their heart purposes of large and terrible revenge; and the readiness with which they conceived on the instant a deep-laid plot for effecting their purpose will seem most surprising to those who do not reflect how much the inventive faculties are sharpened by the necessity for prompt decision, combined with a thirst for blood. They answered, that they could not give their sister to an uncircumcised man; neither was it possible for them to form such marriages with the Shechemites as Hamor proposed, unless every man among them were circumcised. With this answer Hamor and his son returned to their town, and proceeded to the gate—the place of concourse—where they proposed a general circumcision as the only means of securing the advantages which might be obtained by forming a close connection with Jacob's wealthy tribe. These advantages were stated so strongly, that the people gave their full assent to the proposal, and were accordingly circumcised.* Now the third day after the operation is that in which those who have been circumcised are the most distressed by their wound. This fact was well known to Jacob's sons; and, therefore, on the third day, when the Shechemites were all in pain and quite unapprehensive of danger, Simeon and Levi, the full brothers of Dinah, collected such of Jacob's people as they could persuade to join them, and entered the city, where they put Hamor and Shechem and every male to the sword; after which they went and took their sister from Shechem's house, and returned with her to the camp. Their terrible object was accomplished. But then the other sons of Jacob entered the city to plunder all its wealth. They stripped the slain of their vestures; they made plunder of everything they could find in the houses; they made the women and small children captives; and they drove off all the cattle belonging to the Shechemites which they could find in the town and its surrounding fields.

Jacob expressed his just abhorrence of this most unprincipled and barbarous deed; and he continued to retain a deep sense of it, long after all apprehension of the consequences which might be expected to result from it had passed away. Even on his death-bed he spoke of it with indignation and regret.

In the first instance Jacob saw great cause to fear that the inhabitants of the surrounding districts would unite and fall upon him, to avenge this horrid massacre. But his doubts respecting the course it might be best to take were relieved by a Divine command to proceed to Bethel, and dwell there, and erect an altar in that place to God, who had there appeared to him when he was on his road to Padan Aram. This reminded him of the vow which he had made on that occasion; and in obedience to that stricter devotion of his household to the Lord's service which his vow imposed, and that he might the more becomingly approach a place to him so venerable, he commanded that all the idolatrous or superstitious figures and symbols which had been found among the spoils of Shechem, or which belonged to any of his people, should be given up to him. Among these were probably the stolen teraphim of Rachel; and mention is made of ear-pendants, intimating that this favourite oriental ornament had already been turned to superstitious uses, probably by being worn as amulets, and bearing the figures of idolatrous symbols—perhaps of the sun or moon.† He did not destroy these things, as might have been expected, but buried them secretly under an oak which grew near Shechem. By his direction also his household purified themselves and put on clean apparel; and this the first recorded instance of the religious use of outward purifications of the person or attire.

* For some remarks on this transaction, see before, p. 79.

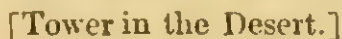
† The Targum of Jonathan interprets the text by paraphrase thus—"The earrings which had been in the ears of the inhabitants of the city of Shechem, in which was formed the likeness of their idols."

They arrived at Bethel in safety, and there Jacob hastened to build an altar to the God who answered him in the day of his distress, and was with him in the way which he went. After this, the Lord appeared to him, and confirmed to him and his heirs the heritage of the promises made to Abraham, and the change of his own name to Israel. On the spot where God then appeared to him he set up another memorial stone, and shed thereon drink-offerings and oil.

Deborah, the old nurse of Rebekah, died during the stay at this place, and was buried with all honour, under an oak, which, from the lamentations made on that occasion, was called "the oak of weeping." Rebekah herself was before this dead; and it was after her death, probably, that Deborah went to Jacob, in order to be with his wives, who were her countrywomen.

No long stay was made at Bethel, and from thence Jacob proceeded southward, to see his father, whom he had left at Beersheba, but who was now in the valley of Mamre, near Hebron. He journeyed slowly, and probably encamped several times on his way, although we read of only one encampment, which was at a place not far from Ephrath [afterwards Bethlehem], where a flock tower, erected by some former pastors, offered its safety and convenience. Such towers still exist, and are still erected. From its summit the desert shepherds hold their watch afar, and within its walls they deposit, in dangerous times, their moveable goods, with their women and young children, if they do not themselves resort to the shelter which it offers. Such are the watch-towers—the Mizpehs—which the Scriptures so often mention.




[Tower in the Desert.]


[Rachel's Sepulchre.]

While Jacob tarried at this place, his beloved Rachel fell in severe labour, and died after she had given birth to a son, on whom, in her sorrow, she imposed the name of Benoni,*—which sad name, but too well calculated to bring to mind the loss he had sustained, Jacob in the end changed to Benjamin.† Here, where she died, Rachel was buried; and her afflicted husband erected over her grave a tall stone as a monument. This was long after known as "the pillar of Rachel's grave;" and its place is now supplied by the modern Moslem structure of which a representation is annexed.‡

* *Son of my sorrow.*

† *Son of my right hand*, i. e. one dear to me; but the Samaritan has Benjamim, "*son of days*," i. e. of his father's old age.

‡ We have no doubt that the original erection by Jacob was merely the most tall and shapely stone which could be found in the neighbourhood. The site seems always since to have been marked by some sepulchral erection or other. That which now exists is such as those with which Sheikhs and other persons of note are honoured. Its date we cannot find, but it is certainly modern. The structure which the travellers of the 16th and 17th centuries figure and describe, had the same general shape, but it was open, in arches, on all sides. The best figure of it is in "Amico's Trattato delle Piante e Immagini di Sacri Edifizi di Terra Santa," 1620. And this was not very ancient, for the travellers of the 13th century (as Brocard) describes Rachel's sepulchre as a *pyramidal* monument.

During Jacob's stay at this place another calamity befel him; for Reuben availed himself of the opportunities which his father's grief afforded to corrupt Bilhah, the handmaid whom Rachel had given to her husband, and who had borne him two sons. Jacob heard of this shameless act; but it does not appear that he took any public notice of it, although it made a deep impression upon his mind, even to his dying day, and it cost Reuben his birthright in the end.

Soon after this, Jacob departed from this sad place, and proceeded to join his aged father in Mamre. None of the circumstances of the interview are told, nor know we any particulars of the intercourse between them during the sixteen years they spent together. At the end of those years Isaac died, at what was even then considered the good old age of 180 years. Esau was then present at Mamre, having probably been sent for as his father's last hour approached; and he joined with Jacob in the last solemn duty of depositing the remains of their parent with those of Abraham and Sarah in the cave of Machpelah. We read not of any difference between them respecting the division of the inheritance. Esau probably, by this time, understood that Jacob did not consider that the old transactions between them disturbed his claim, as the first-born, to a double portion of his father's substance; and for any other than present advantages, a man of his character was not likely to be much concerned.* The previous property which the two brothers had acquired, now increased by their respective shares of Isaac's wealth, was so great, that it was found impossible for them to remain together, as the land was unable to sustain their flocks. They therefore separated peaceably. Esau returned to the land of Seir, leaving Jacob encamped in the valley of Mamre.

The sacred historian, whose example we have followed, conducts the life of Isaac to its close before he commences the long history of Joseph, although its earlier scenes took place not long after Jacob's arrival at Mamre. This story of his beloved son is so intensely interesting; it is so surprising, and withal so natural; it is so perfect,—every minute detail bearing so importantly on the ultimate result, that the most simple story in the world might, in one point of view, be taken for a laboured production of such consummate skill as would, in a fiction, immortalise its author's name; and the whole is withal told with such unaffected simplicity and natural pathos,—that through half the world the story is impressed from very infancy upon the hearts of countless thousands, and its circumstances are in every place as familiar as household words. While the Jew takes pride in the glory of Joseph, and the Christian admires the wisdom and power of God which his history displays, the Moslem is never tired of calculating the personal qualities which he ascribes to him—his form polished as the box-tree and erect as the cypress,—his locks falling in ringlets,—his forehead shining with immortal beams,—his eyebrows arched, and his eyelashes shading his sleepy eyes,—his eyes beaming mildness, the eyelashes darting arrows,—his lips smiling and shedding sweets, his words "dropping honey,"—and his pearly teeth, between his ruby lips, like the lightning playing upon a western sky.†

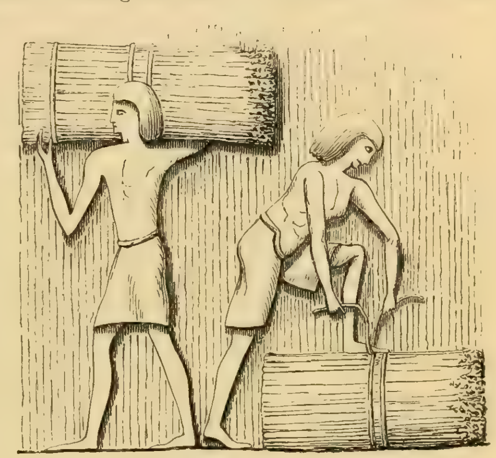
A story thus familiarly known, and which cannot be told in other words than that of the original historian, without great injury to its force and beauty, it does not seem desirable to relate more in detail than may be necessary to carry on the historical narrative, unless when it offers circumstances which seem to need explanation, or which appear calculated to throw light upon the manners and institutions of the time.

There were many obvious circumstances which might concur in rendering the first-born of his Rachel particularly dear to Jacob. He was the offspring of many prayers, his birth had been the subject of unbounded joy, and his father had beheld him as the constant object of maternal tenderness to his beloved wife. When she died, Joseph was also probably the only one of the household who could fully sympathise with Jacob, and mingle tears with him;

* See on this subject before, p. 89.

† Joseph is the Adonis of the Moslem East; and his name is used to express the perfection of masculine beauty. The Arabians, Persians, and Turks, have epics and other poems founded on his story. The epithets in the text are from the Musnuwee of the Persian poet Jami, on the subject of Joseph and Zuleikha (Potiphar's wife). Another of the great Persian poets, Firdousi, has also a poem on the same subject.

for to the others Rachel appears to have been more an object of jealousy than love. It seems also that Joseph was distinguished above all his brethren by his wisdom and his engaging disposition, if not by his superior beauty. These causes had their full effect. Jacob did love Joseph exceedingly; and was at so little pains to conceal his partiality, that he bestowed upon him a much finer dress than any of his brothers wore—" a coat of many colours." The other sons of Jacob, some of whom were not much older than Joseph, seem, upon the whole, to have been a wild and headstrong set of men, with less respect for their father than we usually find in the East. They were displeased at his partiality for Joseph; and their consequent dislike of the youth himself grew to absolute hatred when they learned to regard him as a spy upon them, from finding that, on his return home, after having been out with them in the distant pastures, he was in the habit of telling his father about their evil courses. Joseph also began to have dreams, which were easily interpreted to promise to him some future superiority over them all; and these dreams, which he freely related to them, served much to strengthen the aversion with which he was already regarded by his brothers. Even Jacob himself became grave when one of these dreams seemed to intimate, that not only his other sons, but himself, should, at some future day, bow down before Rachel's son. That dream, in which Joseph thought himself engaged with his brothers in binding sheaves in the harvest-field,* may possibly intimate that Jacob had begun to follow the example of Isaac in paying some attention to agriculture.



[Binding Sheaves.]

It seems very likely that, while Isaac lived, Jacob was careful to keep his flocks at a distance, under the care of his sons, lest, if his own and his father's were together, Esau, when he came to claim his inheritance, might be led to fancy that his brother had already enriched himself out of Isaac's property. Be this as it may, it is certain that, whenever we hear of Jacob's flocks and herds, they are always at some place distant from the valley of Mamre. So now, two or three years after his arrival at that place, we find his sons with the flocks northward, near their former station at Shechem. And, as they had been for some time away, Jacob resolved to send Joseph, who was at home, to inquire of their welfare and bring him word again. He went.

When he approached, his brothers knew him afar off by his coat of many colours, and said one to another, " Behold the dreamer cometh!" and, after some conference among themselves, they came to the resolution of murdering him, and of telling their father that he had been slain by some wild beast. " And we shall see," said they, " what will become of his dreams." But Reuben, whose own recent crime against his father made him unwilling to be a party in bringing any new grief upon him, affected a horror of shedding a brother's blood, and proposed that they should rather cast him into a deep pit, near at hand, which had been dug to receive and preserve the rain-water, but which at that advanced season of the summer was exhausted. They agreed to this proposal, with the view of leaving him there to perish; but it was Reuben's intention to return in their absence and deliver him, to restore him safe to his father.

Joseph had not been long in the cistern before his brothers observed the approach of a caravan of Arabian traders, who were on their way to Egypt, bearing to the markets of that already civilized and already luxurious country the spices and perfumes of the distant East. They knew

* The annexed cut exhibits the early Egyptian process of binding sheaves, which was probably not different from that used in Syria. See also the engraving at the head of this chapter.

that such parties were always glad to buy up slaves in their way, for the same market; and therefore it occurred to Judah that it would be more profitable to sell him than to leave him to perish, while by thus disposing of him they might get rid of him effectually, without loading their consciences with his death. To this the others readily agreed. They therefore drew Joseph out of the pit, and offered him to the Ishmaelites, who agreed to give twenty shekels weight of silver for him; and, the bargain being completed, they departed with him to the land of Egypt.



[Bedouins and Travellers bargaining for a slave.]

Reuben was not a party to this transaction, as he happened to be absent at the time; and he was greatly afflicted, and, according to the oriental method of expressing passionate grief, rent his clothes, when he returned to the cistern to deliver Joseph, and found him not there. He went and told his brothers; but, whether they acquainted him with what had taken place, or left him in the persuasion that Joseph had been killed or stolen unknown to them, we are not informed. We only know that they slew a kid and dipped in its blood the envied dress of which they had stripped their brother when they cast him into the pit; and they sent it to Jacob, saying they had found it in that state, leaving him to judge whether it was his son's robe or not, and to draw his own inferences. He knew the many-coloured coat; and drew, as they desired, the inference, that some evil beast had devoured his beloved son. "And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days. And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, 'For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning.'"

Before the sacred narrative follows Joseph into Egypt, it relates a remarkable incident in the history of Judah, which contributes to illustrate the ideas and manners of that remote age, and of the condition of society under which the patriarchs lived.

At some undefined time previous to Jacob's removal to Mamre, Judah had contracted a friendship with a certain native of Adullam called Hirah; and while on a visit to this person he fell in love with the daughter of a certain Canaanite, whose name was Shuah,

and married her, and by her had three sons, Er, Onan and Shelah. When the first of these became marriageable—long after Joseph was sold to the Arabs, his father provided a wife for him in a woman of Canaan named Tamar; but he died prematurely, being cut off for some unnamed wickedness, without leaving any children by her. Now a custom of that country and state of life,—which was afterwards adopted into the law of Moses, and operates throughout the Jewish history,—required that what was deemed the greatest of all calamities, the death of a man without children to carry on his name and race, should be obviated by its being made incumbent on the next brother of the deceased to marry his widow, with the understanding that the first-born son of this union should to all intents and purposes be regarded as the son and heir of the man who died childless. This duty was often very unpalatable to those on whom it devolved. It was so to Onan, who, according to this custom was obliged to take Tamar in order "to raise up posterity to his brother;" and he, knowing that the issue would not be regarded as his own, took a very criminal method of averting the designed result. For this he died, in some such sudden and marked way as evinced that his death was a punishment from God. It then became the duty of the third son, Shelah, to become the husband of Tamar; but Judah, who began to be afraid for his only surviving son, was glad that his extreme youth justified him in desiring Tamar to withdraw to her father's house, and remain there as a widow, till Shelah should be of sufficient age. She waited accordingly; but observing that her father-in-law made no sign of being willing to let his son discharge the obligation under which he lay, she thought of a plan whereby she might not only remind him of his neglect, but might, perchance, realise that high and happy condition of a mother, after which we have seen all the patriarchal women longing with intense desire.

Judah had lately buried his wife; and after the days of mourning were over he went to Timnah with his old friend Hirah, to overlook the sheep-shearing which was in progress at that place. Tamar being aware of this presented herself to Judah's notice, on the way, in the guise of a harlot, and as such he was betrayed into an unlawful connection with her, whereby, in the end he became the father of two sons. He had promised her a kid, and as security for it left with her *his staff, his bracelets and his signet ring;* but when he sent the kid, to redeem his pledge, the harlot was no where to be found. But three months after he heard that Tamar was with child; and, probably, not displeased at being thus released from his fears about Shelah, at once said, "Bring her forth and let her be burnt!" She was brought forth: but when she produced the staff, the bracelets and the signet, with the declaration that the owner was the father of her unknown child, her stern judge was put to confusion: but the first and uppermost feeling in his mind seems to have been, that all this had justly befallen him for withholding from Tamar the husband she was entitled to claim.

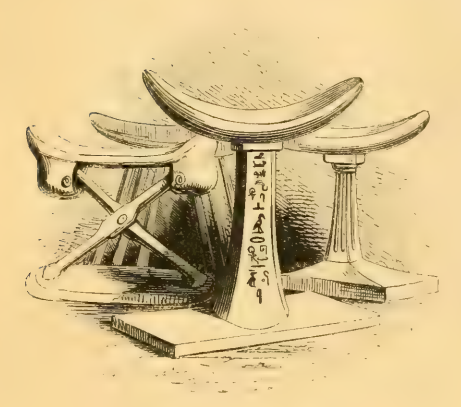
Besides the remarkable practice, and the ideas involved in it, on which this transaction turns, the details bring the manners of the time very vividly before us, and evince the antiquity of usages which still exist in the East. The distinctive dress which harlots wear, and which Tamar assumed for the occasion, the idea of leaving a pledge more valuable than the price, to assure the payment of a price; the use of such ornament as a bracelet, and of such an instrument of authentication as a signet; and, above all, the existence of a capital punishment, and that punishment burning, for criminal conduct in a woman, with the authority assumed by Judah of directing the infliction of that punishment, are all facts of great interest to those who like to inquire into the origin or early history of usages or public notions.

The patriarchal history may here be said to conclude, although the personal history of the patriarchs is not concluded. We are now about to direct our view to scenes very different to those which have hitherto engaged our chief attention. Therefore, although the history of Joseph might be included in the history of the patriarchs,—for he was a patriarch himself, and his father and his brethren still live,—we shall regard him as their harbinger in Egypt, and avail ourselves of the change to conclude this first book of our history.

It is now usual at the conclusion of a book of any history, to offer general remarks on the

usages and customs of the period which that book embraces. We have nothing of the kind to offer. We have rather endeavoured to enliven our leading narrative by making it self-explanatory of the traits of society and character which it brings under our notice. This has not always been an easy operation; and sometimes it has been necessary to throw into notes, at the end of the several chapters, larger illustrations and discussions than the text could have been safely made to comprehend. This, indeed, has not been the sole use of the "Supplementary Notes;" for they have not only enabled us to keep the text more clear from digressive matter, but also, by allowing us to explain things as they occurred, have left no need for those separate dissertations on particular subjects which we might have otherwise deemed it necessary to annex to the several books of this work. This plan it is still our intention to pursue, believing that we shall be the most likely thus to succeed in impressing upon our readers the idea which, from much study and some eastern travel, we have ourselves been enabled to form of the modes of life and developments of character which pass under our review.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES.



[Pillows of Stone and Wood.]

(1) Jacob's Pillow, p. 91.—Jacob's use of a stone for a support to his head during sleep, seems a resource which might be suggested to any one under similar circumstances, and which, therefore, no one has thought it needful to explain by any reference to ancient customs. Yet it is possible that in his case the resource was all the more natural and obvious to him from its not being then customary to use any other pillows than those of some hard substance—such as stone or wood. When we find that such hard pillows or head-stools were in use among so comparatively luxurious a people as the Egyptians, it seems but reasonable to infer that their more hardy neighbours of the desert had no softer rest for their heads. The frame of the Egyptian head-stools is shown in our woodcut, in which the specimens are of wood, except the foremost, which is of alabaster. It is singular that the most costly and luxurious are the hardest, being of stone or hard foreign woods. Those which were employed by the inferior classes were of common soft native woods, such as the sycamore and tamarisk, and sometimes even of earthenware. It is not easy to see how the head could rest comfortably on pillows of this shape and height; and it is, therefore, likely that their ancient use should be explained by their existing use among the Abyssinians, who rest the neck rather than the head upon them.*

(2) Bethel, p. 92.—The following brief but interesting notice of the site of Bethel has lately been afforded by Professor Robinson. After telling us that the site now bears the name of Beit-în, he proceeds to state that,—"It lies just east of the Nablous road, forty-five minutes N.E. of Bireh. Here are ruins of very considerable extent, and among them the foundations of several churches, lying on the point of a low hill between two shallow wadys, which unite below, and run off S.E. into a deep and rugged valley. This was evidently a place of note in the early Christian ages, and apparently also in the days of the Crusades. It is now entirely uninhabited; except that a few Arabs, probably from some neighbouring village, had pitched their tents here for a time. In the western valley we spread our carpets, and breakfasted on the grass within the limits of what was once an immense reservoir. We obtained here from the Arabs butter of excellent quality, which might have done honour to the days when the flocks of Abraham and Jacob were pastured on these hills."—*American Biblical Repository*, April, 1839, p. 420.†

* Wilkinson, ii. 204. Univ. Hist. xv. 84.

† The valuable memoir from which this is extracted, and of which we have written more particularly in the last note to the preceding chapter, has since been reprinted, in a greatly abridged form, in the 'Journal of the Geographical Society,' vol. ix. pt. 2, p. 295-308.

(3) TERAPHIM, TALISMANS, AND AMULETS, p. 96.—Our information concerning the teraphim, so often mentioned in Scripture, is so perplexed by confused statements and doubtful conjectures, that it is not quite easy to arrive at any tolerably clear notions on the subject.

The name, even, has excited considerable discussion. The word is allowed by all the Jewish rabbins to be not Hebrew ; and, seeing that we first meet with the word, and the objects denoted by it, in Syria, beyond the river, it is more natural to look for it in the Syriac language than in the Arabic, in which its etymology has been more generally sought. Now in Syriac the word, in its singular form, (תרף, *teraph*,) means, according to Bar Bahlul, *an inquirer*, which very well agrees with the use of teraphim as oracles.

From the narrative in the text, it is manifest that the figures were of small size, otherwise Rachel could not so easily have removed them, or have concealed them so readily in or under her camel's furniture. Yet the story in 1 Sam. xix. has been thought to show that a teraph was as large as life,—or, at least, that such figures sometimes were so in the end, although those of Laban were small. This may have been true ; but, in our view, the incident in question does not make this manifest. That same passage is also the only one which is adduced to prove that the teraphim bore a human form ; and although we think that they did, it is not clear to us that this is evinced by Michal's contrivance to screen her husband from the wrath of Saul. It is, however, the most received and probable opinion that those images were wholly, or in part, human. From the intimations we have been able to collect, we infer that some of the common forms of the teraphim were not unlike those of the analogous Egyptian figures represented in our cut at p. 96. For although the images among the ancient idolaters, which we conceive to have been strictly answerable to the Scriptural teraphim, sometimes bore animal heads on human bodies, we defer to the opinion that the teraphim always had human heads; although it is allowed that the human form was rarely, if ever, complete—the general figure being that of a bust, or else of a sort of *terminus*. Yet there may be reason to suspect that these figures might bear almost any form which the caprice or fancy of the maker assigned to them. The instance of Micah's teraphim (Judg. xviii.) is the only one in which the materials are mentioned. In that case silver was employed ; but we are not to infer that they were always of silver, or even of metal. The figures, like those of analogous character elsewhere, were probably often of carved wood, or even of earthenware ; but probably not of stone. Of course, no attention is to be paid to the very silly story of the rabbins, who inform us that a teraph was formed of the head of a first-born son, plucked off from the neck and embalmed ; under the tongue of which was fixed a golden plate, with the name of some false deity engraven thereon ; and that the head, thus prepared, and deposited in a niche or upon a bracket, gave vocal answers to the questions which were proposed to it.

The objects which these figures were supposed to represent, and the precise point of view in which they were regarded, are also questions involved in some doubt. That they were not public idols, but mere private property, and for domestic use, is clear from almost every instance in which they are mentioned ; and hence some have inferred that they were small private images—representatives of the larger idols worshipped in the temples. But this is reasoning from later knowledge concerning the household gods of the Romans ; and it is not clear to us that teraphim were not honoured before there were any larger idols, or any temples. We know, indeed, of instances, as in that of Laban and Micah, in which the owners of the teraphim fully recognised the supreme power of Jehovah, and, in the case of the last, laboured under the delusion that these figures were certain to bring down His blessing upon the house in which they were contained. In this use of them there can be no difficulty. We have not only the examples of the Roman household gods—the *penates* and *lares*,—but, in our own day, the tinsel-covered picture of the Virgin or St. Nicholas, conspicuously displayed, receiving marks of respect, and with the lamp kept constantly burning before it,—which may be seen in every Russian shop or cottage, and without which no house would be held happy or prosperous—affords as good an illustration as could be desired, not only in fact but in principle.

But, besides this, it was more peculiar to the teraphim that they were consulted as oracles. This appears constantly in the Bible,* and is confirmed by the mention of teraphim in connection with the arts of divination.† But in what manner the responses were supposed to be conveyed, when reference was made to them, to foretel what was to come or to discover what was hid or lost, we are not told, and it is useless to conjecture. Many writers on the subject tell us that the superstition con-

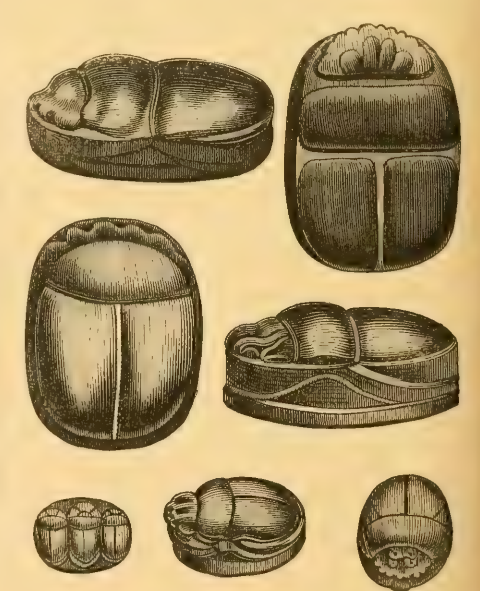
* Compare Judges xvii. 5; xviii. 5, 6, 14-20; Ezek. xxi. 21; Zech. x. 2; Hos. iii. 4.

† 1 Sam. xv. 23.

cerning talismans, with which the whole East is still infatuated, may be traced to the teraphim. We should rather say that they may be traced to the common principles in which these and a thousand other superstitions had their origin; and these principles are easily detected, whatever dispute there may be about details. All of it seems to us to result as plainly as possible from the operation of those views which we have explained in a preceding page (21 *et seq*). When men, without disavowing the supreme Lord of all, undertook to relieve Him from the care of their own small affairs, which they transferred to inferior agents, they ere long thought of attracting and fixing the beneficent attention and influence of those agents, by placing in their houses, or by attaching to their persons, certain symbolical or representative figures, which they appropriated to their determined use with such rites and astrological or other observances as they judged suited to the purpose. They are then the symbols, and draw to him the benevolent attention of those powers which are deemed to stand between man and that great and awful Being, whom he thinks he cannot decorously trouble with the relatively small concerns of his family and home. The practical tendency of this to become a low idolatry in the end, we need not indicate.

Under the view we have taken, such things as talismans and amulets will be regarded much in the light of teraphim to be worn upon the person; and, therefore, a slight notice of these instruments of superstition may very suitably be added in this place, to anticipate the separate statement concerning them which might otherwise be necessary. That such things were known, even in patriarchal times, is manifest from the instance of the ear-rings, which, being instruments of superstition, Jacob obliged his people to deliver up to him, and which he buried under the oak near Shechem. And it is now also well understood that Moses alluded to the previous use of talismans and amulets when he commanded the Israelites to bind his words for a sign upon their hands, and that they should be as frontlets between their eyes.*

It is in confirmation of the views we have stated in a preceding page, concerning the prior antiquity of reference to the heavenly bodies, as the agencies or influences by which the Supreme power was administered over this world and its people, that talismans were first, and for the most part still are, connected with astral influences, and were constructed on astrological principles. They most usually consisted of figures, of various metals and sizes, cast under certain constellations, and bearing the representative figure of the sun or moon or of some planet, or else were charged with certain astrological symbols and characters; and also of stones, more generally *engraved* with such characters or representative figures on the surface, than cut, in mass, into symbolical forms. Yet in the case of the talismanical scarabæus of the Egyptians, the stone itself was cut into the figure of the sacred beetle, the symbol of the sun, while its under surface was charged with figures cut in intaglio, of solar, lunar, and astral symbols and characters. The figures of beetles and hawks, which the Egyptians engraved in emerald and jasper, are noticed by Pliny; and we learn that besides the general virtues attributed to them, they were more particularly held to inspire the soldier with courage and to protect his person in the day of battle, and also to defend children from the malign influence of the "evil eye." As there is little reason to doubt that the Hebrews learnt the use of these very things in Egypt, if they were not previously known to them, and that they, therefore, may be counted among the objects of idolatry and superstition, against which many of the injunctions and prohibitions of the Mosaical law were levelled, there is a double propriety in offering specimens of them to the reader's notice. And while they are recommended to



[Egyptian Scarabæi.—Back and side views.]

his attention as specimens of the earliest talismanical figures which now exist, and which

* Exod. xiii. 9; Deut. vi. 8, xi. 18.



[Egyptian Scarabæi.—Engraved under surfaces.]

unquestionably must, at some time, have been known to the Hebrews, the fact will not be overlooked that they also offer the earliest specimens of engraving on stone; which curious and difficult art the Hebrews certainly did bring with them from Egypt. The shape which these articles bear, and the engravings with which they are charged, will spontaneously suggest to the reader that they might have been used as seals or signets; and to this use it seems that they were in fact applied, although other engraved stones were also used for that purpose. In like manner, while we believe that the old Babylonians engraved cylinders, which have lately engaged so much attention, were astral talismans; there appears also to be reason to conclude that they were used as signets. These talismanical stones of the Babylonians seem to have exhibited a horoscopical representation of the constellation of the heavenly "aspects," under which the parties who owned them were born; or, as we would venture with some diffidence to suggest, of those happier "aspects," chosen by themselves, under which they would have desired to be born, and the favourable influences of which they, by means of these talismans, hoped to fix and concentrate upon their own persons. And these horoscopical representations, if used as signets, would serve as much to identify the party to whom they belonged as a proper name, and still more than the crests which we engrave upon our seals.

It is remarkable that the higher class of talismans among the Orientals were chiefly engraved stones, whereas, in general, metallic figures, of which we first took notice, were little more than simple amulets; and that the reverse of this was the case among the classical ancients, who set the highest of all value upon the talismans of Samothracia, which were made according to the rules observed in the celebrated mysteries of which that island was the seat. There were bits of metal on which certain astral figures and symbols were engraved, and which were usually set in rings.

Now the reader will be prepared to see how the principle on which the ancient talismans were constructed, agrees with that which the more judicious Jewish writers* assign to the teraphim, which as they tell us were figures in the human form, constructed under certain constellations, the favourable influences of which were then thought to be contained in them.

The history of talismans is large and curious; and it will be understood that we have only stated such facts as seemed necessary for the purposes of the present note.†

Amulets require little separate notice as



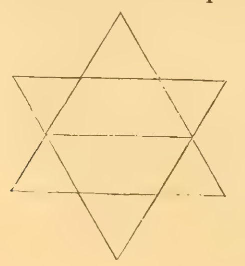
[Egyptian Amulets.]

* Such as Aben Ezra, Maimonides, and R. Eliezer.

† It may, however, be desirable to specify the several kinds of talismans which finally came into use. 1. The *astronomical*, or rather *astrological*, which were charged with celestial signs, accompanied with intelligible characters. 2. *Magical*, which bore monstrous figures, mysterious words, and names of unknown angels. 3. *Mixed*, containing both celestial signs and strange or barbarous words, but nothing otherwise superstitious or any angelical names. 4. *Sigilla planetarum*, marked chiefly with Hebrew numeral letters, and used by the framers of horoscopes and fortune-tellers to throw a mystery over their arts. Other magical figures, bearing Hebrew names and characters, models of which are given by Agrippa. The two last are of *comparatively* modern invention, and have little claim to be regarded as talismans. The third is doubtful; and the two first are the only proper subjects of antiquarian research. The first and most ancient is that on which our observations have chiefly borne.

they were but a lower kind of talisman; and most of such consideration as they require has been involved in the preceding statement. It is difficult to say where the line between the talisman and the amulet should be drawn. But they were not generally considered so much connected with astral influences as the talismans. They were, in fact, for the most part, what we call "charms," intended to guard against special evils and particular diseases. Their forms were as much diversified as their objects among the ancient idolaters. Almost every different kind of gem had its virtue as an amulet; and besides these, amulets among the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans, and, we may conclude, among the Syrians, often bore the form or ornament for the person, such as crowns of pearls, necklaces of shells, gems, coral, &c.; with the heads and figures of gods, heroes, lions, horses, dogs, rats, birds, fish, and various grotesque and obscene objects. The annexed engraving offers specimens of some of those which were in use among the ancient Egyptians.

The Jews became much addicted to the use of amulets, especially for the prevention or cure of diseases—and, indeed, their "medical" practice consisted of little else. "There were hardly any people in the whole world," says Lightfoot, "that more used, or were more fond of amulets, charms, mutterings, exorcisms, and all kinds of enchantments." For some while before, and ever since, the time of Christ this has been true; and the use of them was not discouraged by the ecclesiastical rulers. *Their* only difficulties respected the use of them [probably in common with other curative measures] on the sabbath-day; and the decision was, that a man should not go abroad with his amulet on the sabbath, unless it had been prescribed by an approved "physician"—that is, by one who was known to have cured at least three persons previously by the same means. Their amulets were sometimes certain small roots hung about the neck; but more generally certain words in writing—being, in the simpler forms, extracts from the law supposed to be applicable to the case; but often mysterious names and characters, disposed according to the rules of cabalistic art—frequently within



the well-known hexagonal figure called *the shield of David*, or, *the seal of Solomon*. This, with some other Jewish practices, appears to have arisen from the misapprehension or gross perversion of the passage in the law* to which we have already referred.

From their example the Christians adopted, among other amulets, the use of written charms, consisting, for the most part, of words taken from the gospel—which practice is not yet wholly extirpated from some rural districts of our own country. And the same example probably led the Moslems to that most extensive use of written amulets, composed generally of sentences from their Koran, which we now find every where among them.†

(4) Antiquity of Coined Money.—p. 101. The word in the original is *kesitah*, rendered "pieces of money" in our authorised version of the Bible, but "lambs" in the margin. The word is rare, and only occurs in three places:—here; in the retrospective reference to the transaction which is given in Josh. xxiv. 32; and in Job xlii. 11. All these references therefore apply to about the same time. The conclusion of many critics is, that they were pieces of money stamped with the figure of a lamb or sheep—perhaps as being of the current value of that animal—and consequently that an advance to coined money had been made since the time Abraham weighed out 400 shekels of silver as the price of the field of Machpelah. But this seems to us so incredible, that we know not how the notion could enter the mind of any one who possessed the slightest acquaintance with the subject. We disbelieve it utterly, and for the following among many other reasons.

First, it will be observed that all the versions whose testimony is of any value—being the Septuagint, Samaritan, Syriac, Arabic, and the Latin Vulgate, render the word by "lambs;" to which we may add that the marginal readings, in our own version, happen to be very generally preferable to those in the text.

* Deut. vi. 7, 8.

† For further information on the subject of Teraphim, the reader may be recommended to consult, Selden, De Diis Syriis Syntag, 1629; Jurieu, Histoire Critique des Dogmes, pt. iii. ch. 4; Carpzov, De Teraphimis, in Apparatus Historico-Criticus, 1748; Dicteric, Antiq. Biblicæ i. 271, 272, 555, Banier, Mythology and Fables of the Ancients, B. vii. ch. 6; Calmet, Dictionary, in the word "Teraphim:" Taylor, On Teraphim in "Scripture Illustrated;" Jahn Biblische Archæologia. iii. 504. On the subject of Talismans and Amulets, much information may be found in several of the above, as also in Lightfoot, Heb. and Talm. Exercit. in Matt. xxiv. 22; Encyclop. Methodique: Antiquities; art. Talismans; Townley, Dissertation viii. prefixed to "Reasons for the Laws of Moses, from the More Nevochim of Maimonides;" and Lane's Modern Egyptians, vol. i. ch. 11.

History offers no indication that coined money existed anywhere in the east or west, till upwards of a thousand years after the date of this transaction, and it offers much evidence that none did till then exist; and it is utterly incredible that the Hebrews or the Canaanites, not only in the time of the patriarchs, but at any subsequent date in their history, should have had stamped coin *before* near and distant nations, many of them more civilized, and nearly all of them more commercial than themselves. In fact, the invention of marked or stamped money is not one, as far as we know, for which an oriental origin has been claimed. Gold and silver in ingots, bars and rings, delivered and received by weight, were the general instruments of traffic among the nations of Western Asia, and even the Egyptians, down to a date considerably after that at which *we know* that the Greeks were in possession of coined money; nor among any of these do we find any coined money till we can historically prove that they were in a condition to learn the use of it from the Greeks. This is singularly the case with the Jews, among whom we find not the least trace of money coinage till so late as the time of Simon Maccabæus, to whom the Greek king of Syria, Antiochus Sidetes, granted the privilege of coining money.* It seems indeed sufficiently clear that although they might for some time before have had some slight acquaintance with coined money as a curious foreign invention, they did not know it as a practical matter until after their national existence had been extinguished by Nebuchadnezzar. And then, for some centuries or more, they were in too dependent a condition to have any money of their own, but used that of their successive masters and their neighbours, until, under the Maccabees, they rose again to such national importance as led them to desire a coinage for themselves. Even after this, however, foreign money, first Greek and then Roman, was that which they chiefly employed in their dealings.

* 1 Mac. xv. 6.

To return to Jacob.—If the preceding statement shows the improbability—even the absurdity, of alleging that he paid stamped money for the field he bought at Shechem, it only remains to ask whether he actually gave a hundred lambs, or as much silver as was worth a hundred lambs. We have not much objection to the latter alternative, but we see not what necessity for it is created by the fact that silver had already become a medium of exchange, when we know that then and for a very long time after it was only used for this purpose under circumstances in which barter would have been impracticable or less convenient. The Shechemites had land, and Jacob had sheep; and if they wanted his sheep as much as he wanted their land, it was the most natural thing possible for him to give and them to take his sheep for their land, even though silver was known as a medium of exchange. Otherwise there must have been an intermediate process; and the money paid by Jacob would have been the amount which he had obtained by the sale of a hundred lambs, or their equivalents in other cattle, in some other place. Where the direct operation was equally acceptable, it would be preferred to this intermediate process. The present is not the only fact which illustrates or bears on this. Jacob himself required cattle, not silver, as the wages of his service with Laban; and cattle were the only presents which he offered to his brother Esau. His son Judah offered Tamar a kid as the price of her sin. Even Solomon paid the Tyrians, not in silver, but in corn and oil for the workmen and timber which they supplied: and in the long-subsequent case of Hosea's purchase of a wife for five shekels weight of silver and a measure and a half of corn, we see the one process helping out the other.

BOOK II.

THE HEBREWS IN EGYPT AND THE WILDERNESS.

CHAPTER I.

JOSEPH.



[Pharaoh's Palace.]

When the Ishmaelites who had bought Joseph arrived in Egypt, they exposed him for sale,(1) and he was purchased for the domestic service of Potiphar, an officer of high rank in the court of the Egyptian king, and chief of the royal police.(2) Instead of repining in his new situation, he applied himself with great diligence and fidelity to the discharge of its duties.

These qualities are too rare and valuable in a newly-purchased slave to escape the master's notice. Joseph's conduct engaged Potiphar's attention and won his esteem; and when he moreover found that his slave was blessed with singular prosperity in all his undertakings, he raised him to his confidence, and, in the end, he intrusted the management of all his concerns to him, making him steward, not only over his household, but over his lands. In this honourable station—which in the East is one of more authority and power (even when held by a slave) than anything in our own state of society would suggest—the son of Jacob might have been tolerably happy; and doubtless was so, save when his mind wandered to his father and his father's tents.



[Egyptian Stewards.]

He had been ten years in the service of Potiphar, and had reached the fine age of twenty-seven years, when it happened that his extreme comeliness attracted the attention of his master's wife. Finding him insensible to her slighter seductions and overtures, she at last came to declare to him plainly her criminal desires; and this she did one day, when all the family were from home, in so very passionate a manner, that Joseph, not deeming it safe to stay and plead, as he had been wont to do, his obligations to his master, and his duty to his God, abruptly withdrew, leaving in her hand his outer garment,* of which she had laid hold.

As might be expected, the love of Potiphar's wife was turned to bitter hatred by this affront, and she resolved to be the ruin of the man by whom her advances had been repelled. The means by which this might be effected would readily occur to the sharp invention of a resentful woman. She raised a terrible outcry; and, when those who were within hearing hastened to the spot, she declared that Joseph had made an attempt upon her virtue, but when he heard her cries he fled, leaving behind him his mantle. The promotion of a foreign slave, descended from a class of men hateful to the Egyptians, to the chief authority in the large household of Potiphar, was calculated to raise the envy and jealousy of other members of that household. This the woman knew, and, artfully appealing to feelings so well calculated to make their ears greedy for a tale to his disadvantage, she said, " See, he [Potiphar] hath brought in an Hebrew unto us to mock us."



[Egyptian Lady.]

When the good man himself came home, she related to him the story of the guilty impudence of the " Hebrew slave," with such passionate earnestness of indignation,

* This was a kind of narrow mantle or skirt, covering the back and reaching to about the middle of the leg. In the sculptures and paintings of ancient Egypt it is almost always seen as worn by overseers and stewards, and appears to have been a part of their distinguishing dress. From the manner in which the lower part of it only is brought into view, it is manifest that it was only used as the outer covering for the back.

that no doubt of its truth could be suggested to his mind, especially as the evidence of the cloak lay before his eyes. In most cases an Oriental master would, under such circumstances, put his slave instantly to death; and, as Potiphar's resentment must have been all the greater for the esteem in which he had held Joseph, and the entire confidence he had reposed in him, we agree not with those who think that such feelings now operated in preventing him from slaying the slave he supposed so unfaithful, but are rather disposed to conclude that in a country which was so subject to law, and whose government was so completely organised as that of Egypt, no master, not even of Potiphar's rank in the state, was allowed to inflict death even on a slave. The measure he took was to send Joseph to the prison in which the king's prisoners were kept, and which was probably under his own direction as chief of the royal police. Here "his feet were galled with fetters; the iron entered into his soul."*

But the horrors of this imprisonment were soon mitigated through the kindness of the keeper, who was won by his engaging disposition and his abilities to release him from his chains and commit all the other prisoners to his charge. As imprisonment has rarely been used among the ancient or modern nations of the East as a punishment *after* trial or judgment, but only to detain men in safe keeping until they have been tried, or until it has been determined what to do with them,—it is rather difficult to account for Joseph's long imprisonment of three years, but by supposing it the result of his master's indecision, encouraged by the opportunity, which his official post afforded him, of keeping his slave imprisoned without question or interference from other parties. We have no doubt that, when Potiphar sent Joseph to prison, he intended to take further measures, but many circumstances may be supposed which were calculated to prevent the fulfilment of this intention. We incline to imagine that he soon found cause to suspect the truth of his wife's story; and it is possible that Joseph had given a true account of the matter, which, on further reflection, his master may have been rather disposed to believe.† But then, while, on the one hand, he could not inflict a further and final punishment, or bring him to trial—if trial was necessary to a further punishment; on the other, a proper regard to his own peace and honour would prevent him from restoring Joseph to his former place in his household. Joseph was his slave, and he could not liberate him without also relinquishing his property in him, to which, or to the other alternative of selling him, he may have seen objections which we do not see, unless in the desire of keeping close the story of his wife's conduct. He probably therefore satisfied himself with acquiescing in the favourable treatment which Joseph received in the prison from the keeper. It must not be forgotten that this officer was Potiphar's own subordinate, and that he was himself the superior functionary who was responsible to the king for the prisoners; and it follows from this that, when it was found that Joseph's talents for business might be turned to account in the management of the prison, he was still, in fact, serving his old master, and indeed rendering services of such value as might alone suffice to account for his not being sold or manumitted.

Joseph had been about a year in the prison when Potiphar ‡ received into his custody two of his brother officers of Pharaoh's court, the chief butler and the chief cook, who had given the king some cause of deep offence;§ and he, willing to show them all the attention which his duty allowed, recommended them to the especial care of Joseph.

Anciently, as now, throughout the East, the utmost attention was paid to dreams; and the interpretation of them became an art, in which the ingenuity of many intelligent minds found

* Psalm cv. 18. We should scarcely have imagined that fetters *of iron* were thus early in use, but for this express statement.

† The Bible does not say that Joseph did give any account of these transactions to his master, and Josephus says that he did *not*. But, as we afterwards find Joseph making interest with the chief butler to get his case laid before the king, (a circumstance, by the by, which the historian omits,) it does not appear likely that he said nothing to undeceive his master.

‡ The Scripture history does not *name* Potiphar; but, as it distinguishes the party from the keeper of the prison, and gives the very same title which had previously been assigned to Potiphar, we have no doubt it is the same person, unless, indeed, Joseph's master had died during the year, and another had taken his office; and this does not seem likely, as then some change would probably have taken place in his slave's condition.

§ The paraphrast Jonathan makes their offence a design against the life of the king.

much mistaken exercise in the attempt to assign a vital meaning to the fantasies of dreamy sleep. Hence every one sought an interpretation of whatever dream made sufficient impression to be remembered; and he became most uneasy for whose dream no interpreter could be found. We shall see many instances of this as we proceed.

One morning Joseph observed that the countenances of the two great officers were more downcast than usual, and on asking the reason they told him that it was because they could procure no interpretation of the singular dreams with which their sleep had been visited. He then desired to hear their dreams; and, knowing their superstitious notions, took the opportunity of hinting that the interpretation of dreams, when they were of any importance, did not depend on rules of art, but, to be true, must be suggested by God, who thus sometimes saw fit to convey warning and admonition. The dreams themselves, being pictures of actual circumstances, are, so far, illustrative of the usages of the Egyptian court. The butler's dream shows how a grape-sherbet (not " wine ") was made for the royal drink. He beheld a three-branched vine, full of ripe clusters, which he seized, and pressed their juice into Pharaoh's cup, which he then delivered into the king's hand. Joseph told him that this dream signified that in three days Pharaoh would come to a decision on his case, and would restore him to his former office. " And when it shall be well with thee," continued Joseph, " think on me, and show kindness, I pray thee, to me; and make mention of me to Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house. For, indeed, I was stolen away from the land of the Hebrews; nor have I done aught here for which I should be put into a dungeon."

The chief cook was encouraged by this interpretation to tell his dream also. He had seemed to bear on his head three trays; the uppermost contained all kinds of baked meats for the king's table. But, as he passed across the court of the king's palace, " the birds of air "† came and stole them from the basket. This dream was interpreted by Joseph to signify that in three days the king would decide upon his case also; but, instead of restoring him to his post, would cause him to be hanged on a tree, where the birds of the air should come and devour his carcase.‡



[Egyptian with a Tray of Meats on his head.*]

All happened as Joseph had been enabled to foretell. On the third day from that the king's birth-day occurred; and we are instructed that even at this early date birth-days were celebrated with rejoicings. Pharaoh made a feast for his great officers; and it being, seemingly, customary for him to distinguish the occasion by acts of grace and favour where they could be worthily bestowed, he now pronounced his decision respecting the two great officers then in prison. The chief butler he pardoned, and restored to his place, but, having found no ground for clemency in the case of the head cook, he commanded him to be hanged.§ To this account

* It will be seen that in this cut the man is in the act of removing the tray from his head, and has knelt down for the purpose.

† Kites probably, which much infest eastern cities, and are of surprising boldness. Stories are constantly told of their seizing and bearing off meat, even from the heads of men, when carried through the open air.

‡ We note with sorrow such a practice as this among the Egyptians, which was wisely and humanely forbidden to the Jews by the law of Moses. This prohibition offers further evidence that the practice previously existed. But before we reflect upon the civilization of the Egyptians, for their leaving the bodies of criminals to rot, or to be devoured before the public eye, let us recollect that we, who claim so high a place among civilized nations, have only within the present century abolished the same horrible practice.

§ The execution of the chief baker at this time is as natural as the liberation of the other; for the king had been led by the occasion to consider and decide on both their cases.

the sacred historian adds the significant announcement—"Yet the chief butler did not remember Joseph, but forgot him."

After this two years passed away, and Joseph still remained in prison.

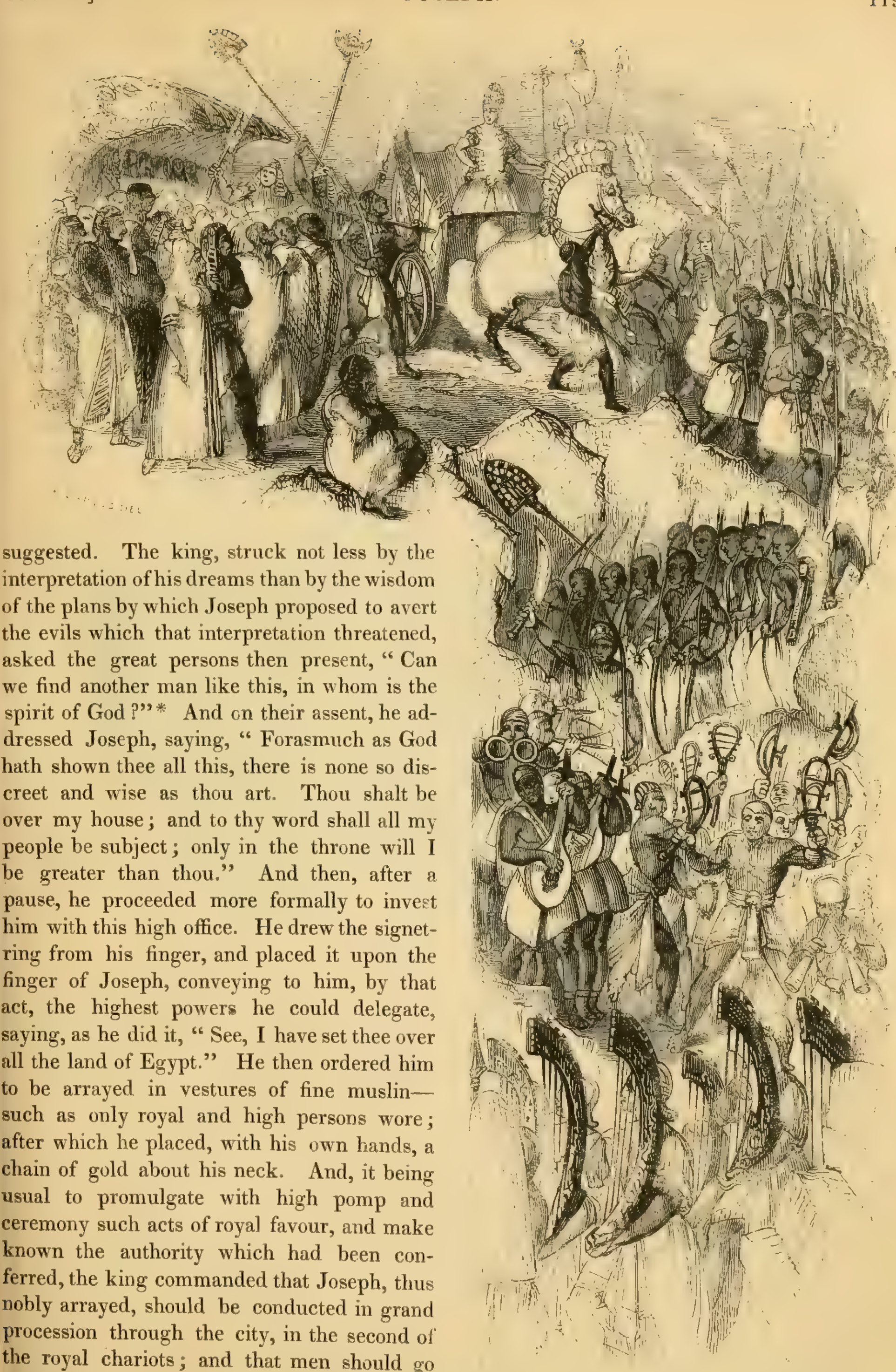
At the expiration of that time the king of Egypt himself had two remarkable dreams by which he was greatly troubled. It is still usual for the cattle in the hot valley of the Nile, when they are driven to the water, to enter the stream and stand there as long as they are allowed, solacing themselves in the cool wave. Pharaoh thought that he was standing on the bank of the river, when he beheld seven beautiful fat heifers come up out of the water, and feed in a meadow. After a while there came up at the same spot seven of the leanest and most ill-conditioned heifers that the king had ever seen, and stood beside the others on the river's brink; and, in the end, the seven fat and beautiful heifers were devoured by them. The king awoke: and when he again fell asleep dreamed that he saw spring up, on one stalk, seven good and plump ears of corn; and after that sprang up seven other ears of corn, thin, and blighted by the east wind; and by these the first were devoured. As these dreams appeared to have a certain significance and analogy not common in dreams, the king was, in the morning, more than even usually anxious to have them interpreted; but none of the interpreters and diviners—none of the "wise men," who customarily gave the interpretation of his dreams—were able to assign any satisfactory meaning to them; and their failure brought to the mind of the chief butler the dreams of himself and the chief cook in the prison-house, with the exact accomplishment of the interpretation which Joseph had given. Of this he gave the king a brief but clear account: and Pharaoh, happy in the prospect of relief from the unusual trouble of an uninterpreted dream, sent an order to the chief of the royal police to release Joseph, and send him to the palace. When this order arrived, Joseph was just allowed time to shave his head and beard,* and change his raiment, and was then hurried off to the royal palace, and presented to the king. The sovereign said to him, "I have had a dream, and no one hath been able to interpret it. Now I have heard say of thee, that when thou hearest a dream thou canst interpret it." But the faithful Joseph, not willing to encourage even a kingly delusion, answered, "It is not in *me*; but may God give to Pharaoh answer of peace." Then the king, without further parley, related his dreams; and Joseph told him that they had both the same signification, which was, that seven years of exuberant plenty were coming, and that they would be followed by seven years of the severest scarcity ever known—so severe that the land would be consumed, and the preceding years of plenty be utterly forgotten. This *principle* of the dreams being explained, the connection of both of them with the river obviously suggested to all who heard the dreams and their interpretation, that the years of plenty would result from an unusually favourable succession of those inundations by which the valley of the Nile is fertilized; and that the ensuing years of scarcity would be caused by the failure of its waters to rise to the fertilizing limit.



[Egyptian King on his Throne.]

Joseph, perceiving at once how the exuberant supplies of the seven fertile years might be so husbanded as to meet the deficiencies of the seven years of scarcity which were to follow, proceeded to state his views in this matter to the king, and advised that some discerning and wise man should be invested with full powers to give effect to the measures which he had

* The Egyptians shaved both the head and beard. A man in prison would be likely to neglect this practice: but it seems to have been considered indecent to appear unshaven before the king.

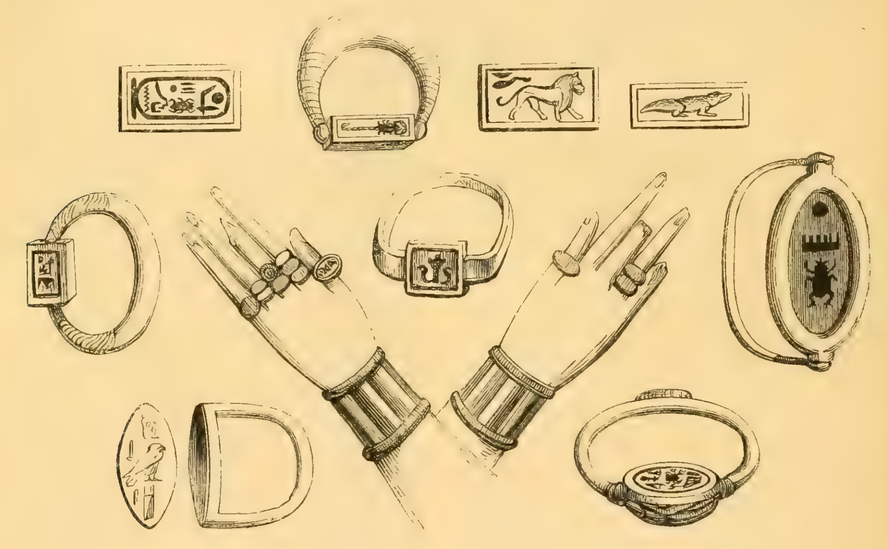


suggested. The king, struck not less by the interpretation of his dreams than by the wisdom of the plans by which Joseph proposed to avert the evils which that interpretation threatened, asked the great persons then present, "Can we find another man like this, in whom is the spirit of God?"* And on their assent, he addressed Joseph, saying, "Forasmuch as God hath shown thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art. Thou shalt be over my house; and to thy word shall all my people be subject; only in the throne will I be greater than thou." And then, after a pause, he proceeded more formally to invest him with this high office. He drew the signet-ring from his finger, and placed it upon the finger of Joseph, conveying to him, by that act, the highest powers he could delegate, saying, as he did it, "See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt." He then ordered him to be arrayed in vestures of fine muslin—such as only royal and high persons wore; after which he placed, with his own hands, a chain of gold about his neck. And, it being usual to promulgate with high pomp and ceremony such acts of royal favour, and make known the authority which had been conferred, the king commanded that Joseph, thus nobly arrayed, should be conducted in grand procession through the city, in the second of the royal chariots; and that men should go before him to cry, "Bow the knee."

There is much in all this which is calculated to instruct us in the extreme antiquity of

* We wish this to be marked as an intimation that the kings of Egypt were in the habit of asking, at least formally, the consent of their council to the course they proposed.

customs which still exist, and of ideas which still prevail in the East. Here we see not only the signet-ring, but its employment as the sign and symbol of authority, delegated by him to whom it belonged and for whom it was made. In those days, when not the manual signature, but the impression of the signet-ring, authenticated every royal act and command, there was nothing, unless a due regard to circumstances, to prevent the holder of the royal signet from doing whatever he pleased in the king's name. Then the dress not only gives the seal of high antiquity to the Oriental ideas concerning dresses of honour, but even to that bestowing an office by such a dress, which is not quite abandoned in Europe, and the former prevalence of which is indicated by our very words, "in*vest*" and "in*vest*iture." The chain or collar of gold is still used, almost everywhere, in courts, as a badge of honour; and, in the higher cases of its use as such, it is even now fastened about the neck by the sovereign hand. Of the procession of honour, analogous examples remain among ourselves—although the public taste is becoming too refined to receive from their imposing circumstances those impressions which, in their



[Signet-Rings of Ancient Egypt.*]

institution, they were intended to convey. All these actual circumstances, and others which they imply, serve to evince how little this most ancient court was wanting in those conditions of splendour and ceremony with which, in other countries and later ages, the sovereign state has been surrounded. The whole transaction may be instructingly compared with the account which the Scripture gives† of the promotion of Mordecai by the Persian king.

When Joseph returned, and again stood before the king, Pharaoh more strongly still expressed his own view of the powers he had conveyed to him. "I am the king," said he, reserving his royal authority; "but without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt."

It has never been unusual in Oriental countries for foreign slaves to rise to the highest offices in the state; and there have been countries in which none but such persons could rise to them. But, from the view of Egyptian society which we have been enabled to realize, we are led to

* This cut represents different seal rings of ancient Egypt, and are very curious, not only as such, but for the specimens of ancient seal-engraving which they offer. It will be observed that in some of the specimens the stone is a cube engraved on each of its four sides, and made to revolve in the ring, so that any of the inscriptions might be used at the option of the possessor. The hands in the centre of the engraving are copied from a mummy-case in the British Museum, and are those of a female. They serve to show the manner in which finger-rings were worn, and the awkward profusion in which they were exhibited by the women of ancient Egypt. The bracelets will also engage the notice of the reader, as illustratin the principal form of an ornament so often mentioned in the Scriptures.

† Esther, vi. 4—11.

suspect that such promotion of a foreigner and a slave could at no time be very usual in ancient Egypt, where all the avenues to power and influence in the state were zealously guarded by the priesthood, which would little brook the intrusion of any one not of their order—much less a foreigner—into the high office which had been bestowed on Joseph. The system may have been less rigid at this time than it afterwards became: but that it operated to some extent we see in the measures which the king—although he already had the consent of his council—deemed it prudent to take, to confirm Joseph in his high place. That his foreign origin might not be constantly presented to the mind of the Egyptians, by his strange, and, to them, barbarous name of "Joseph," the king bestowed upon him the high-sounding and significant Egyptian one of "Zaphnath-paaneah."* And that he might establish him in his position, by securing him the countenance and support of the priestly order—which was indispensably necessary to him—the king got him married to Asenath, the daughter of Potipherah, the chief



[Females of Priestly Families.—Official Dresses.]

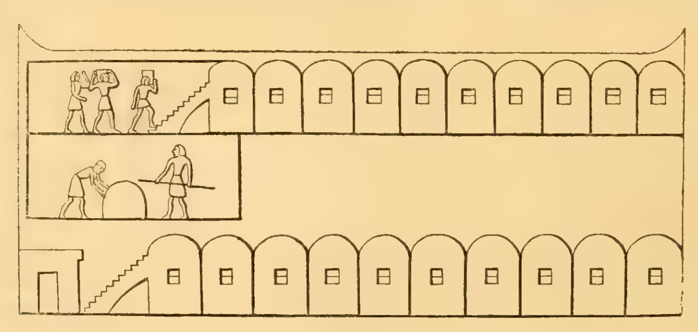
priest of On, better known by its later Greek name of Heliopolis—the city of the sun. This city was in all ages a sort of ecclesiastical metropolis of Lower Egypt—the prime seat of the sacred mysteries and higher science of the country; and was, as such, the fountain from which the Greek philosophers and historians were allowed to draw the scanty information which they have transmitted to us. For these reasons, as well as because the sun, which was there worshipped, was, as in other idolatrous systems, one of the first, if not the chief, of the gods—and in Egypt the rank of the priests was proportioned to that of the gods to whom they ministered—there can be no question that the priest of On, into whose family Joseph married, was one of the most eminent and influential of his illustrious order. The marriage was, therefore, doubtless a great temporal advantage to Joseph, whatever may be said of it in other respects.† By this marriage Joseph had two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, before the years of famine came.

* The revealer of secrets.

† We know too little of the affair to feel authorized to pass a very decisive judgment upon it. We shall, therefore, only observe that, in the strong remarks which some divines have made on the subject, it appears to have been entirely overlooked that Judah, the only other of Jacob's sons of whose marriage we know anything, married a woman of Canaan, and there is every reason to conclude that all his brothers did the like. It does not appear that any of them went to Padan-Aram for wives; and how far it may have been preferable for them to have married among the descendants of Ishmael, Midian, and Edom, is another question.

Soon after his elevation, Joseph made a progress throughout the land, in order to acquaint himself thoroughly with the materials with which he had to work, and to determine the particular arrangements which might be necessary to give effect to the measures which he contemplated. These measures do not appear to us to have been well understood or appreciated, although considerable attention has certainly been given to them; and they, indeed, deserve the best attention, whether we look upon them as forming, together, one grand operation, the several acts of which were made, with statesmanlike skill, to bear on one another in working out the important result which his view embraced; or whether, without attributing to him so much political foresight as to have seen all the results from the beginning, we confine our attention to the consummate ability with which his course was taken under the circumstances which necessarily arose. There has been much objection, not less to the principles than to the details of his procedure—arising, we are persuaded, from the inveterate habit of measuring all things by our own standard, without adequate reference (if any) to, or allowance for, the very differing ideas which grew up, and seemed reasonable, under other systems of government, and under other public notions than those by which our own ideas are formed and guided. We are far from saying that the proceedings of Joseph are not to be explained or justified by the severe rule of estimate which is formed by the application of our own ideas of government to measures of Oriental policy; but we are not willing that Joseph's character as a statesman should suffer in consequence of the application of such a standard to a crude and erroneous view of his position, and of the circumstances under which he proceeded. In our own view, the character of Joseph stands so high, and he appears before us with hands so clear from any taint of political iniquity, that we are willing his conduct should be tried by the severest rule which can be found, as long as the facts of his procedure are thoroughly understood. Brought up at first under the tents of his father, in a spirit of order and combination; and then well exercised in affairs of detail, and in the management of men, while in charge first of a noble household, and then of a prison,—the providence of God had furnished Joseph with more than ordinary training for the high place to which he was now called. Our own task is to detail his proceedings in that place, according to the view which we have taken, and to offer such remarks upon them as may seem necessary; and if the result contributes in the slightest degree to the vindication of one whose public character we highly value, our satisfaction will be very great.

In his tour of survey, Joseph directed the construction of immense granaries in the principal



[Egyptian Granary.]*

cities, and established proper officers, who were charged with the duty of buying up† one-fifth part of all the corn produced during the seven years of plenty, within the surrounding district,

* From this cut it appears that the granaries in Egypt consisted of a series of vaulted chambers; and as the men are engaged in carrying the corn up the steps to the top of these vaults, it is evident that the corn was cast in through an opening at the top, which does not appear in the engraving—just as coal is thrown into our cellars from the street.

† It is usual at this day, and has, we believe, always been so, for the government to buy up, at a fixed and fair valuation, a proportion of the produce of the land from the cultivator; and, by the present government, the whole produce is thus sometimes taken up.—'Lane's Egyptians,' i. 158.

the borders of which met those of other districts, for which other cities with public granaries were the centres of collection. The whole land was thus, for the purpose of the collection, divided into districts, probably of nearly equal extent. The corn thus collected was to be stored away in the granaries for use during the years of famine. All this was done. And



[Storing Corn.*]

let it be observed that in originally recommending this plan to Pharaoh, Joseph did not, even to him, propose the aggrandisement of the royal authority as any motive for, or probable effect of his operations, but only that " the people of the land might not perish through famine."

Those years of famine came at the appointed time. It appears that the dearth was very general, and not by any means confined to the valley of the Nile. Syria, at least, was not visited by the rains, the want of which, in their season, kept back for seven years the fertilizing inundations of that river. When the pressure of the famine began to be felt severely by the people—or, in the strong language of the sacred historian—" When all the people of Egypt began to famish, they cried to Pharaoh for bread." The king referred them to Joseph; who now understanding that the proper time was arrived, opened his well-filled granaries, and sold not only to the Egyptians, but, with some restrictions, to foreigners, such corn as they required. When their money was all spent, they again came to Joseph, and with that determined manner which the knowledge that there was corn to be had was calculated to give, said, " Give us bread; for why should we die in thy presence, though the money fail?" The vizier, knowing that the subsistence of their cattle must, under these circumstances, be a matter of great difficulty to them, offered to give them corn in exchange for their cattle. This offer was cheerfully accepted; and Joseph, by bringing the flocks and herds together, and subjecting them to a general system of management and subsistence, was doubtless enabled to preserve them at a less expense to his stores than would otherwise have been practicable. It is on this occasion that we first read of *horses*, which are named among the cattle which the Egyptians exchanged for corn.

By this means the people secured subsistence for another year; but in the year following they had no cattle left to offer for corn. They therefore came to Joseph, and offered—freely offered, be it remembered,—to transfer their lands to the king, and to place their persons at his disposal, provided they were supplied with food while the famine lasted, and with seed to sow the land, when it again became cultivable. Their stipulation for seed to sow the land, in the same breath that they offer to sell their lands and services to the king, seems to us to give their proposition a very different appearance to that in which it is usually represented. Does it not clearly intimate that they expected still to remain in *occupation* of the land? For what cause had they to be anxious about seed, if they had no land in which to sow it?—or what cause, if they expected no longer to derive benefit from the labour they bestowed upon it? One who views himself as one " sold"—a slave or a serf, makes no anxious stipulation for seed to cultivate his master's fields; for he knows well that his master will look to that, and will take

* This curious subject shows the section of a granary, to which the grain is in the act of being transferred after it has been winnowed. The clerk, seated on the heap, writes down the number of the measures borne to the granary, seemingly from the oral report of the man who stands on the ground with raised hands.

care that his lands *shall* be cultivated. When they therefore said, " Buy us and our lands," it must be evident that they are to be understood in some such sense as, that, in consideration of their families being maintained during the famine, they would relinquish their freehold right in their lands, but regard the king as supreme proprietor of the soil, and cultivate it as his hereditary tenants or farmers, paying him, in acknowledgment of his claim, such a proportion of the produce for rent as the justice of Joseph might determine. And if their proposition is to be understood in some such way as this, then the same sense must be assigned to Joseph's acceptance of it, in the name of the king, and also to the terms of his answer, echoing their own words, when he said, " Behold, I have bought* you, this day, and your land, for Pharaoh." His character has paid too dearly for these words: although the sense in which he really used them, and in which he understood them to be used by the applicants, is, quite conformably to the view we have here taken, evinced by the agreement which he actually made. This was, that they were to remain in occupation of the lands of which Pharaoh had become the sovereign proprietor; and that they were to pay him, as yearly rent, one-fifth part of the produce, in lieu of all other charges and imposts to which it may have been subject. Thus Pharaoh became the sovereign proprietor of the soil in Egypt, and thus the former proprietors became his tenants—" servants," the text indeed says, for the word " tenant" does not occur in all the Bible; and those whom, from the particulars offered, we recognize as tenants, are called " servants" there. That this is the case in the present instance—and that the people became tenants, paying a produce rent and not serfs or slaves,—is so self-evident from terms of the compact, that no agreement or explanation seems needful to make it clearer. And we are to remember, that a tenant in the East—*and more especially in Egypt*—has, even in his worst estate, that of the *fellah*, enjoyed almost a freehold right in his land, from which he could not be removed by the proprietor, and which he might transmit to his heirs, and might even alienate it by gift or sale to a stranger; although, in the last case, he had to obtain the permission of the proprietor and to pay him a fine. The proprietor could only resume the occupation of the land or introduce a new tenant when the last died without heirs.†

If we could be well aware of the position in which those Egyptians stood *before* Joseph's regulation took effect, we should very probably find more and stronger reasons for exonerating the minister of Pharaoh from the charges which have been brought against this part of his conduct.‡ The sovereign in almost every country of the East has, from the most remote times, been regarded as the paramount proprietor of the soil. The tendency of Oriental ideas is decidedly to regard him as such: and, even under the Jewish theocracy, God, as the King of the Hebrew people, was mindful to instruct the Israelites that the land was his,§ which they held of him as hereditary tenants, much in the same way as that in which, under the regulation of Joseph, the Egyptians held their lands of Pharaoh; the offerings and tithes which they gave for the support of His worship, being, in one point of view, regarded as a produce-rent, paid to him for the land. It is likely, therefore, that the subject had before this been mooted among the Egyptians, and that they only took this occasion of expressing their acquiescence in a matter which had in former times been talked of and considered. Their doing so *now* had the advantage of giving them the appearance of a claim for subsistence out of the public granaries during the famine: while the substitution of a settled produce-rent, in

* Part of our mistakes in these matters proceeds from our giving a rigid European form to loose and metaphorical Oriental expressions. So of the words to *buy* and *sell*; which to our ears do not sound pleasantly in such transactions, but which are applied, orientally, in an indefinite, lax sense, to many circumstances in which we should not use them. Thus a wife is said to be *bought* and the sum or presents delivered by the bridegroom is her *price*. Yet she is not therefore a slave: she has rights and privileges, and knows how to claim and exercise them.

† Great and oppressive alterations have been made by Mohammed Ali. But we believe these are still the formal rights of the Egyptian fellah, though they have been made barren of good to him. Respecting the land-tenure in Egypt, see 'Reynier, De l'Economie Publique et Rurale des Egyptiens,' p. 96, &c.; 'Heeren, Policy and Commerce of Ancient Nations,' sect. iii. c. 2; Silvador, Histoire des Institutions de Moise, iii. 343.

‡ As by Larcher, for instance, thus:—" When Pharaoh king of Egypt possessed himself of the money, cattle, and lands of his people, *by the barbarous counsel of a stranger*, whom he had made his minister, and who had espoused the daughter of the high priest of the sun, he touched not the possessions of the priests: and, while the people chose rather to make themselves *slaves* than perish with famine, the ministers of the altars felt nothing of the public miseries, and were furnished with corn in abundance." Herodote, tom. ii. p. 237.

§ "The land shall not be sold for ever; for the land is mine: for ye are strangers and sojourners with me."—Lev. xxv. 23.

place of the various and fluctuating, and therefore harassing, contributions which they had made to the support of the government, and for the conduct of wars and public works, may have seemed to them a very adequate compensation for the merely nominal relinquishment of their independence. There can be no doubt that the immediate effect of this measure was to substitute a produce-rent of one-fifth in the place of all other exactions; and that Joseph's acquiescence in *their* plan was acceptable to them, and the terms considered favourable, may be seen from the gratitude with which it was received :—" Thou hast saved our lives," said they ; " let us find favour in thy sight, and we will be Pharaoh's servants."

One who writes on these matters is much tempted to digress into the history of the land-tenures of Egypt, as made known to us by Herodotus and Diodorus. But our limits do not render it convenient, nor is it necessary for our purposes, to take notice of more than the book of Genesis specifies. It may suffice to mention, that the facts of these later historians may be easily shown to be in unison with those which our earlier account supplies, while the essential spirit is perfectly the same. It appears, then, that the history of these transactions exhibits the sacerdotal aristocracy as a distinct body of landed proprietors from those with whom Joseph had to deal. Now these proprietors did certainly at a later day, and, from circumstances, we judge it to be sufficiently certain that they did before, farm out their estates to cultivators, or hereditary tenants, who paid them a produce-rent, and were exempt from any charges to the support of the state. This being the case, the people of Egypt, when they offered to give up the property in chief of their lands to the crown, and to become its tenants, had already before their eyes an example of the operation of that system under which they were willing to be placed; and, considering the splendour of the Egyptian court, and the cost of its establishments and undertakings, and the taxation upon the independent landowners which was necessary to support them, we may have reason to more than suspect that they had little cause to feel their condition superior to that of the tenants of the hierarchy, with their single payment of a certain and moderate rent, which rose or fell with the abundance or scarcity of the season. Upon the whole, therefore, while they no doubt knew that their proposition would be acceptable to the king, we see ground to conclude that the operation would on their part be regarded under any circumstances without repugnance.

Among the settled nations of the East, it has always been the disposition to identify the state with the king, and for every one to consider that in serving the king he serves the state; and therefore any regard for the *liberties* of the people is, perhaps, a thing impossible to an Oriental. We have no wish to attribute it to Joseph; it being quite sufficient to satisfy us, if the statements which we have offered tend to acquit him of that political injustice which has been laid to his charge. We think he acted fairly;—not unmindful of the king's interests, on the one hand, nor, on the other, desiring to take an undue advantage of the people's wants.

Only two items of the charge against Joseph remain to be noticed. When this bargain had been completed, we are told that, " As for the people, Joseph removed them into cities from one end of the borders of Egypt even unto the other end thereof." Whence it has been most strangely imagined that he removed them from their original seats to distant towns; whereas, it plainly enough means no more than that, having now undertaken to feed the people from his granaries, he desired them to remove from the open country in every district, where all agricultural labour was at a stand, to the cities of these several districts in which the granaries were situated, for the convenience of distributing the corn to them. This was done throughout all the country.

The other charge is, that, while he thus dealt with the people, he took care to court the favour of the priestly aristocracy, with which he was himself connected by marriage, by not interfering with their possessions, but supplying them freely from the public stores with such corn as they required. The answer to this is, that the facts are true, but the inferences wrong. The priests were from time immemorial *entitled* to receive an allowance of provisions from the government, the rents of their lands being applied to the support of the temples and the public worship; and certainly it would not have been just to deprive them of their subsistence

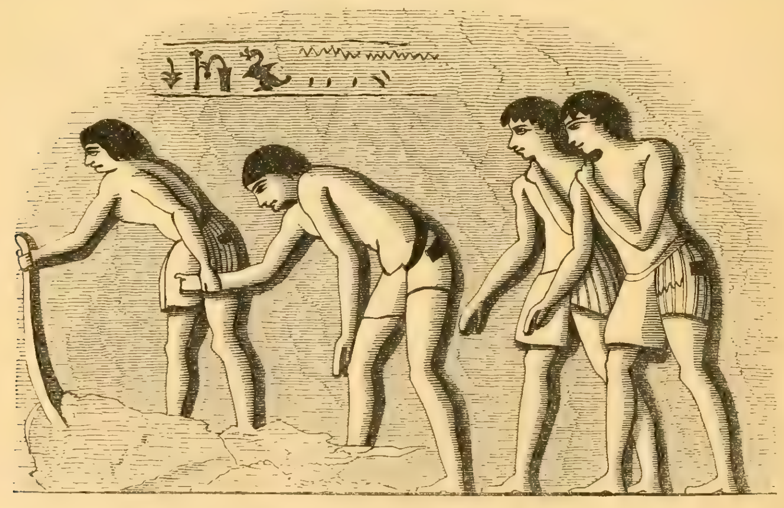
when their own lands lay unproductive. Besides, the priestly nobles filled all the high offices of state, were constantly about the king as his counsellors and companions—the king himself being high-priest by virtue of his office: and, as Joseph must have been assured, the manifestation of any disposition to interfere with their privileges would most certainly be abortive, and would probably be the signal for his downfall; while the kind and beneficent relations which subsisted between the priests and the people, who regarded their lands as a property devoted to sacred uses, would probably have rendered such an interference as little popular with the mass of the Egyptian community as with the aristocracy. Under such circumstances, we see nothing so very blamable in this part of Joseph's conduct.

We have given more space to this matter than the mere wish to justify Pharaoh's vizier would have obtained. But it happens that this justification involves the statement of illustrative facts and principles, which will hereafter, and in various forms, come frequently before us, and which will be much the better recognised and understood from the statement which has now been given.

The desire to preserve the connection of the narrative has led us on to the end of the years of famine. But now, in resuming the history of Jacob, and in connecting it with that of his dear and well-remembered son, we must go back to the second year of the scarcity.

The famine began to be felt very severely in the land of Canaan, when the news came that strangers were allowed to buy corn in Egypt. Jacob heard it, and determined to send his sons to bring a large quantity.* He detained with him only his youngest son Benjamin, the only son of his beloved Rachel now remaining to him, and who had succeeded to the place in his father's tenderest affections which his full-brother Joseph had once occupied. Benjamin was at this time twenty-six years of age. Jacob's sorrowful remembrance of Joseph's loss made him reluctant to trust his Benjamin from home, especially on such a journey; "Lest," said he, "some mischief befall him on the way."

Among the foreigners who came to buy corn in Egypt were the ten sons of Jacob. It seems that, although the Egyptians themselves could purchase their corn of the officers whom Joseph had appointed for the purposes of the distribution, no strangers could obtain corn until they had received the special permission of Joseph. The sons of Jacob therefore presented themselves at his audience; and now, fulfilling at once the dreams which in their anger they had vainly endeavoured to frustrate, they bowed themselves before him as "the



[Bowing before a Public Officer.]

* This is apparent from his sending so large a party. That there were no more asses to bear the corn than there were men, is a common but surpassingly strange notion. One man can manage several beasts of burden, and doubtless each of Jacob's ten sons had several under his charge.

governor of the land." Twenty-two years had passed since they sold him for a slave. He was then a mere lad of seventeen, and now had reached the staid age of thirty-nine; a great change had therefore taken place in his personal appearance, and they could scarcely have known him under any circumstances, much less now, when he appeared before them as a great Egyptian lord, surrounded by every circumstance of honour and distinction, and speaking to them through an interpreter. Little could they think that this was he whom they must have supposed, if alive, to be the slave of some Egyptian master, whose cattle he fed, or to the humblest of whose household wants he ministered. But they were recognised by Joseph; and seeing only ten of them, all of whom he knew,* and that the one wanting was he whom, from his youth, he would have guessed to be the son of his mother, he appears to have apprehended that they had sacrificed him also to their jealousy of their father's only remaining favourite. He therefore acted so as to learn from them the prosperity of his father's house, and also the fate of his brother, without making himself known to them. He put on a harsh manner, and "spake roughly to them," charging them with being "spies, come to see the nakedness of the land."

To conceive the full force of this charge, and to appreciate the terror and distraction it was calculated to produce, it is necessary to recall the attention of the reader to the operation of the circumstances which have been related in a preceding page†—the reign of the shepherd-race in Egypt, their expulsion, and their settlement in Palestine under the name of the Philistines. The period of their intrusion was still remembered keenly by the Egyptians; and, on their account, every tent-dwelling shepherd had become such an abomination in their sight that they would not even eat with him. For this aversion the oppressions to which they had been subject under this foreign and barbarous rule, would alone sufficiently account; but, besides this, the valley of the Nile was bordered by pastoral tribes, who were not only objects of dislike to the Egyptians, on account of the vast difference in their modes of life, but on account of their continual aggressions upon the inhabitants of the more exposed rural districts. Always on the watch for prey and for opportunities of spoliation—we cannot doubt that the Egyptians would regard the pastoral tribes around them with that mixed dislike and apprehension of which they are to this day the objects in every settled country to which they are neighbours. Thus, then, while the Egyptians had the general cause of dislike towards the pastoral nomades, they had also the particular cause of having been recently under the iron yoke of a shepherd-race; and, while their experience was calculated to make them suspicious of shepherds generally, they had particular cause to be apprehensive of those shepherds who, after their expulsion from Egypt—with great cost and difficulty—had withdrawn into Palestine, where they had been gathering strength, and had perhaps already made some aggressive forays into the most exposed border-district of Egypt, to which they were still the nearest neighbours. Now Jacob's sons were not only nomade shepherds, but they came from Palestine—from the very borders of that territory which the old Philistine enemies of Egypt at this time occupied. Hence that they were spies, come to seek openings for future aggression, was a most obvious suspicion of an Egyptian to entertain; and the men's hearts must have quaked within them when they heard the charge, and perceived the force with which it bore upon them. They protested their innocence; and, in their anxiety to repel the charge, they entered into a particular detail of the circumstances of their family: in which they afforded him the information he desired—namely, that his father was alive and well, and that his brother Benjamin was at home with him. Anxious to see his brother, and to assure himself that their statement was true, Joseph made his appearance the test of their sincerity:—"Hereby shall ye be proved: By the life of Pharaoh, ye shall not go from hence unless your youngest brother come hither. Send one of you, and let him fetch your brother; and ye shall be kept in prison, that your

* He could not have known Benjamin *personally*, had he been present, as he was a mere infant of three or four years when Joseph was sold.

† 34, 35; also in the fifth note, p. 83-85.

words may be proved, whether there be truth in you: or else, by the life of Pharaoh, surely ye are spies." These repeated asseverations, as observed by Dr. Hales,* indicated strong emotions of resentment at the remembrance of their cruelty; and his conduct in the end proved it, for he "put them all together into ward for three days." He made them taste for three days the sufferings he had undergone for three years, and probably in the very same state prison. But the third day his anger cooled, and he reversed the former sentence, and dismissed them all but one, Simeon, whom he kept as a hostage for the appearance of Benjamin. From the tried cruelty of Simeon's disposition, in the perfidious massacre of the Shechemites, he had probably been the most active against Joseph himself.

The remorse of conscience and compunction of mind which they felt on this occasion, and not only felt but expressed in his hearing, not knowing that he understood their dialect, quite disarmed the remaining resentment of Joseph. The trouble of Simeon and his detention in Egypt brought, in a lively manner, to their remembrance their dealings with Joseph, and the Egyptian bondage into which they had sold him. And they said one to another—"We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear: therefore is this distress come upon us." And Reuben answered them, saying, "Spake I not unto you? saying, Do not sin against the lad; but ye would not hear me. Therefore, behold, an account of his blood is now demanded." Joseph could not stand this. He turned away from them, and wept. But, still firm to his purpose, he returned, and after causing Simeon to be put in bonds before their eyes, he dismissed them; but as a delicate token of his good will, he restored their money in their sacks, and gave them provision for their journey home.

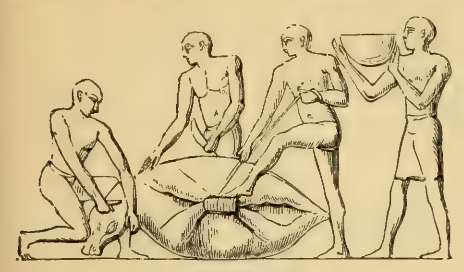
On their return home, they told their father all that had befallen them. His pathetic comment was—"Me ye have bereaved of my children. Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye would now take Benjamin away. All these things are against me." The offer of the more earnest than sagacious Reuben to undertake the responsibility of Benjamin's safety, with the addition, "Slay my two sons if I bring him not to thee," ministered little comfort to the afflicted patriarch, who persisted—"My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he only remaineth: if mischief should befal him by the way in which ye go, ye will bring down my grey hairs in sorrow to the grave." Thus the matter rested for the time; for as Jacob would not part with Benjamin, and his sons would not go without him, they remained until all the corn which they had brought from Egypt was consumed. Then the question was again opened; and, at last, Jacob was obliged to consent to allow Benjamin to go with them—encouraged, probably, by his confidence in Judah's address and force of character. For he was the spokesman on this occasion, and solemnly engaged to be surety for Benjamin, and to "bear the blame for ever" if he did not restore him safe to his father. Having given his consent, Jacob added such advice as his long experience in the world suggested. They were to take not only the money required for the corn they now wanted, but also the former money which had been returned to them—perhaps by oversight; and, in order to mollify the mysterious "Lord of the country," of whom he had heard so much, it would be well if they took a quantity of the choice products of the land of Canaan, which were known to be most acceptable in Egypt,—being balm, wild honey, spices, myrrh, pistachio-nuts, and almonds†—as such a present and tribute of respect as great men were then, as now in the East, in the habit of receiving from those who sought their favour. Last of all, as one still reluctant, he said, "Take also your brother, and arise, and return to the man. And may God, the Almighty, give you favour before the man, that he may send away your other brother and Benjamin. But if I be bereaved,—bereaved I am."

They went, and arrived in Egypt. One morning they made their way to the place where

* In this and the following paragraph his condensed account of the circumstances has been mainly adopted.

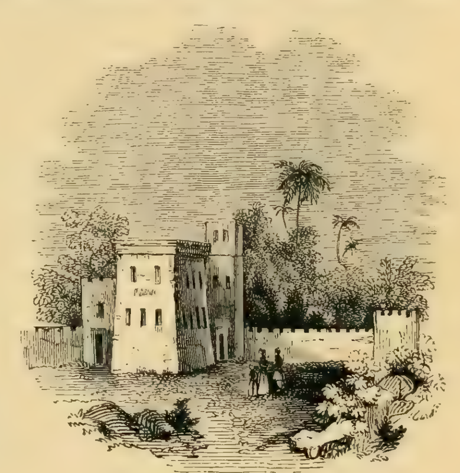
† For remarks on all these products see the notes to the 'Pictorial Bible' on Gen. xxxviii. and xliii. Some of them will be further noticed in the Natural History of this work.

Joseph daily transacted his business concerning the sale and distribution of the corn. When he saw them, accompanied by a youth whom he guessed to be his brother Benjamin, "the son of his own mother," he directed "the ruler of his house" to take them home to his dwelling-house, and to slay and make ready; for it was his intention that they should dine with him at noon.* The steward did as he was ordered, and took them to his master's house. This proceeding occasioned considerable alarm in the minds of Jacob's sons, who thought that perhaps some pretext was sought against them, for making them bondsmen and taking away their asses, in connection with the money which was due for the last supply, and which they had found returned in their sacks. They, therefore, spoke to the steward, stating how the matter really stood; and he, who probably knew how they were related to his master, and what were his intentions towards them, answered them kindly, assuring them that nothing was on that account imputed to them. He also produced their brother Simeon; and after having brought them into the house, gave them water to wash their feet, and provender for their asses.



["Slay and make ready."]

When Joseph came home they brought him their present, and bowed themselves down reverently before him. "And he asked them of their welfare, and said, 'Is your father well, the old man, of whom you spoke? Is he yet alive?' And they answered, 'Thy servant, our father, is well; he is yet alive.' And Joseph said, 'Blessed of God be that old man.'† And they bowed their heads and made obeisance. And he raised his eyes, and saw his brother Benjamin, the son of his own mother, and said, 'Is this your younger brother of whom you spoke unto me?' And he said, 'God be gracious unto thee, my son.' And Joseph made haste (for his bowels yearned towards his brother), and sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber and wept there." ‡



[Egyptian House.]

He then washed from his face all trace of tears, and returned to them, mastering for a while his strong emotions. He commanded dinner to be brought; but as it was an abomination to an Egyptian to eat with a tent-dwelling shepherd, Jacob's sons were seated apart from Joseph and his Egyptian guests. They were also placed according to their seniority, at which they were greatly astonished, for some of them were so nearly of an age, that this discrimination implied a more intimate knowledge of them, in some quarter, than they could suppose that any one there possessed. When the small round tables were brought in with the provisions, Joseph conferred on Benjamin a truly Oriental mark of esteem, by heaping the table which was placed before him with five times the quantity of food which the other tables bore.(3) After the dinner they drank wine together and were merry.

* This conveys several indications of Egyptian usages, at least in great families;—that they dined at noon,—that meat was not bought of butchers, but was slaughtered on the premises, at least when an entertainment was to be given; and that this was done only just before the meat was to be cooked. All these are still subsisting usages. The cut shows the method employed by the Egyptians in slaughtering cattle for food. Beef was their favourite animal food. They rarely ate mutton; which is a most remarkable circumstance, when we consider how prevalent the use of mutton has been in the East, and that, in fact, it is, in a warm country, so much lighter and more wholesome than beef.

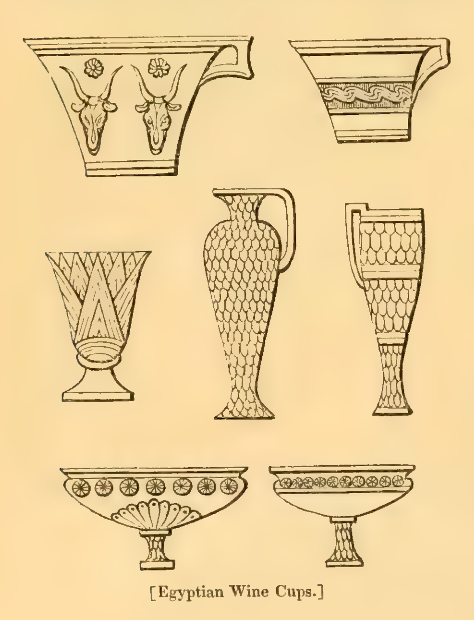
† This beautiful clause is not in the present Hebrew text, but is preserved in the Samaritan and Septuagint.

‡ Gen. xliii. 27—30.



[Egyptians at Meat.]

Joseph had one more trial in store for his brothers before making himself known to them. He wished to make their conduct towards Benjamin a test of the present state of their feelings, and of such repentance of their conduct towards himself as would make them shrink from allowing harm to befal one whom their father so tenderly loved. With this view he directed his steward privately to introduce his silver drinking-cup into the mouth of the youngest brother's sack; and when they were at some distance from the city, to pursue them, and after a thorough search, to bring the pretended thief back to him. All this was punctually executed: and when the cup was found in Benjamin's sack, they were very far from manifesting any indifference—very far from pursuing their way, and leaving him to that slavery in Egypt, to which, in by-gone years, they had consigned his brother. They rent their clothes in bitter anguish, and all returned to the city.



[Egyptian Wine Cups.]

When they re-appeared before Joseph they fell on the ground before him; and not seeing how Benjamin could be cleared from what must seem so plain a case, they only answered Joseph's reproaches by declaring that Benjamin and they were all his slaves. To this Joseph answered that such was not his intention: only he with whom the cup was found should become his bondsman; but as for the rest, they might return in peace to their father. Now was the time for Judah—he at whose proposal Joseph had been sold for a slave, on the one hand, and who, on the other, had become the surety that no harm should befal the son of his father's right hand,—now was his time to redeem his character, and full nobly did he discharge that duty. We cannot give his speech entire, nor need we; for who has not often turned to that most perfect pattern of natural and affecting eloquence which was ever delivered. It will be remarked that, with great address, he abstains from any reference to the crime. He does not acknowledge it; for that would

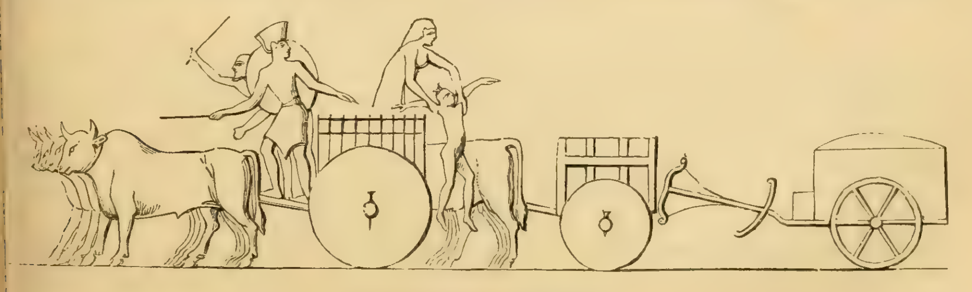
have been to reflect upon Benjamin: nor does he deny it; for that would have been to reflect upon the justice of Joseph. But all his efforts were directed to move his pity for their father —for that old man of whom they had spoken to him. He touched on every circumstance which could evince the strength of that old man's love towards Benjamin, and dwelt much on the difficulty with which he had consented to part with him. Jacob had said, "Ye know that my wife bore to me but two sons. And the one went from me, and I said, He is torn, torn in pieces; and I have not seen him since. And if ye take this one also from me, and mischief should befall him, then will ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave." "Now, therefore (continued Judah), when I come to thy servant, our father, and the lad be not with us—It will be, when he seeth that the lad is not with us, that he will die; for his life is bound up in the life of the lad. Thus will thy servants bring down the gray hairs of thy servant, our father, in sorrow to the grave." He concluded in announcing the favour he sought, which was, that Benjamin might be allowed to return to his father, and that he might himself remain a bondsman in his stead.

If all this touches us so deeply, how must not Joseph have been affected! He could no longer act a part in such a scene as this,—he could refrain himself no longer, but wept aloud, and made himself known to them, crying, "I AM JOSEPH!"

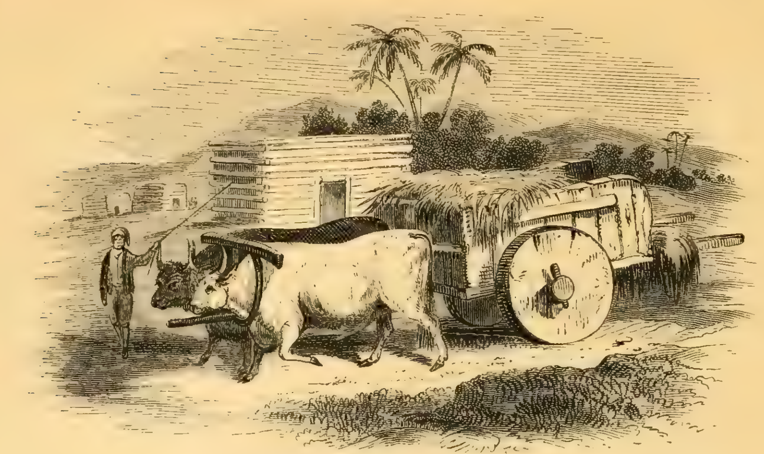
Who shall adequately realize or describe the profound emotions of that hour! The brethren of Joseph lay dumb before him. The quick sense of their wrong against him, and the dread of his remembering vengeance,—the sensible evidence which they had of the power and splendour of him whom they sold a naked slave to the Arabians,—and the sudden and keen perception that all their old malice against him had but worked out the fulfilment of the high destinies, the mere thought of which had moved their hate and envy, and made *them* heedless of "the anguish of *his* soul," when *he* entreated the mercy which *they* refused :—all this, with the complication of circumstances in which they were now placed, overwhelmed them, and held them mute, in astonishment and remorse.

Perceiving this, Joseph addressed them in words of kindness and encouragement, desiring them to be no longer angry with themselves, but rather to admire the overruling providence of God, through which all things that had seemed evil and hard to bear, had worked together for great good to them and to himself. He further opened to them the plan he had in view for their benefit. As the famine was still to continue for five years, it would be best for them to return home and fetch into Egypt their father, with all their households and possessions—that they might all be sustained in comfort near him, and not come to poverty. Being thus reassured, his brethren rose from before his feet; and he kissed them all, and wept upon them.

The rumour had reached the king that Joseph's brethren were come; and it is a pleasing evidence of the esteem in which he was held, and the regard which he had conciliated, that a domestic incident which was calculated to be a satisfaction to him, was highly agreeable to Pharaoh and all his court. The monarch sent for him, and authorized him to express the kindest intentions towards them, and the utmost anxiety for their welfare. He, as well as Joseph, saw that it would be best for them to come to Egypt, and he had the consideration to direct that they should be well supplied with provisions for the way, and that they should be furnished with carts, (4) in which the aged Jacob, with the women and young children, might



[Carts from Egyptian Sculptures.]



[Modern Syrian Carts of Ancient Form.]



[Carts of the Tartar Nomades.]

pass from Canaan to Egypt with more comfort than by the more ordinary means of conveyance. All this was done; and, in dismissing them for their journey, Joseph gave each of them two suits of raiment, but distinguished his own brother Benjamin by the present of five dresses, with the addition of three hundred shekels-weight of silver.

We may be sure that this journey home was performed with much more speed than the former. Then they had to tell their father of one son taken from him, and another demanded; now they had to acquaint him with the recovery of one who had long been lost, and for whom he had never ceased to mourn. Joseph had charged them to tell his father of "all his glory in Egypt;" and so eager were they to tell it, that, as they drew near the camp at Mamre,

they hastened on before the carts, and told him—" Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt!" At this most unexpected and surprising news, " Jacob's heart fainted, though he believed them not." They therefore told him all the particulars; and by the time they had done so, the carts had come up to confirm their story. Then the spirit of Jacob revived, and he said, " It is enough. Joseph, my son, is yet alive. I will go and see him before I die."

He soon departed; and, on his way to Egypt, paused at Beersheba to offer sacrifices at the altar in that place. There he was favoured with a dream, in which God removed any doubts he might have felt about the ultimate consequences of the important step he was now taking, by assuring him that his sojourn in Egypt was a part of the divine plan concerning his race, which should there be fostered into a great nation, and then brought forth from thence. Thus encouraged and relieved, Jacob proceeded on his way, and at last entered Egypt with his sixty-six descendants,* accompanied, no doubt, by a large retinue of slaves and shepherds.

Joseph, without having, as yet, consulted the king, had, in his mind, fixed upon the land of Goshen as their future abode—not only as being best suited to a pastoral people, but as being that which the Egyptians would, from various circumstances, be the most willing to see in their occupation. This being a border district in the direction of Palestine, was the first part of Egypt which Jacob reached; and he then sent Judah onward to the capital to acquaint Joseph with his arrival. On learning this, Joseph entered his chariot, and sped to meet his father. They met. Joseph threw himself upon the neck of his dear old father, and wept upon his neck a good while. " Now," said the greatly moved Jacob, " Now I can die, since I have seen thy face—since thou art still alive!"

After the first emotions of this meeting had subsided, Joseph proceeded to explain to his brothers the further measures which were necessary. He intended himself to go and announce their arrival to Pharaoh, after which he would introduce some of them to the royal presence, and they were instructed what answers to return to the questions which the king would be likely to ask. He did not conceal from them that " every shepherd was an abomination to the Egyptians;" and his instructions were skilfully framed with a reference to that state of feeling.

So he took with him five of the most comely of his brothers, and returned to the capital. He first himself went to the king to inform him that his father's family had arrived, with all their flocks and herds, and were now in the land of Goshen, awaiting his commands. His brothers were then introduced; and, on being asked what was their occupation, they, as they had been taught, answered, that they were shepherds, as all their fathers had been. They



[Overseer of Cattle.†]

* These were all his *descendants* who went down with him from Canaan to Egypt. The number *seventy*, given elsewhere, counts in, besides, Jacob himself, with Joseph and his two sons who were already in Egypt; and the number *seventy-five*, in the New Testament (Acts vii. 14), excludes these, but adds to the sixty-five the nine wives of Jacob's eleven sons, the wives of Judah and Simeon being at this time dead. These results are displayed more largely by Dr. Hales, who derives them from a critical examination and comparison of the passages which bear on the subject.

† The central figure, of largest size, is the overseer, who, attended by his clerk, receives accounts of the herdsmen, whose postures manifest great respect. The one who lies on the ground, at the clerk's feet, has probably committed some offence from which he seeks to avert punishment. The overseer is followed by a servant who bears his bow and arrows and the stool to assist him in ascending and alighting from his chariot. The other servant bears a pair of sandals and an axe.

added, that they had come to sojourn in Egypt, for in the land of Canaan the drought had been so severe that they could find no pasture for their flocks; and concluded with a request that they might be allowed to remain among the pastures of Goshen. On this the king turned to Joseph, and told him that the whole land was at his disposal; to place them in the best part of it—in Goshen, if that district seemed the most suitable for them. He also desired him, if among his brothers there were men of sufficient ability, to make them overseers of the royal cattle, an employment which their previous habits and qualifications rendered the most suitable for them.

Joseph's plan for the benefit of his family having thus happily succeeded, he introduced his father also to the king; but whether immediately after or not, is not quite clear. The patriarch respectfully saluted Pharaoh, in acknowledgement of the consideration and favour with which he had been treated; and the king, much struck by his venerable appearance, entered into conversation with him, particularly inquiring his age. Jacob's answer was impressive:—"The days of the years of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage." After some further conversation, probably, Jacob again saluted Pharaoh, and withdrew from his presence.

We are now to regard the Israelites as in that pastoral district, on the eastern border of the Delta, which the Scriptures call "the land of Goshen:" and it may not be unimportant to note the sound and far-sighted policy which induced Joseph to fix on that district for them, and to procure the grant of it from the king. Reverting to the information already given concerning the shepherd-race, which, not long before this time, had held Egypt in subjection, we may now further remark, that this land, on account of offering the best pasture-grounds in Lower Egypt, had been their principal settlement, and that in which they maintained themselves for some years after they had been expelled from the other parts of the country. Having been not long vacated, and but little wanted by the Egyptians for the pastoral purposes to which it was more properly applicable, it seems to have lain at this time waste and unoccupied. It was therefore a district, the occupation of which by the Hebrews dispossessed no one, and which, from its peculiar character, the Egyptians would see in their occupation with as little ill-will as they were capable of feeling towards a shepherd race; while its situation on the borders would tend, in a great degree, to keep them apart from the Egyptians, and prevent the disputes and interferences, as well as the idolatrous contamination, which might be expected to arise in any situation which would have involved them more among the natives. There were also circumstances which might have rendered not only tolerable, but highly agreeable, to them, that the Hebrews should occupy this district. "It stretched along the Bubastic, or Pelusiac branch of the Nile, and formed the eastern barrier of Egypt towards Palestine and Arabia, the quarters from which they most dreaded invasion; and the 'nakedness' of which they soon had the satisfaction of seeing in a short time covered by a brave and numerous people, amply repaying, by the additional security and the resources which they gave to Egypt, the hospitable reception which they experienced, and the indulgence which was now extended to them."* These considerations were of especial importance, when Egypt would seem not yet to have recovered the exhaustion which necessarily followed its convulsive efforts to expel the hated race.

The seven years of famine were, in Egypt, succeeded by abundant and seasonable years; for the wonted overflow of the great river was not withheld, and therefore the soil offered all its rich products in great plenty. After having been cherished by his son during the remainder of the famine, the aged Jacob lived to see twelve of these fruitful years. Then, seventeen years from his arrival in Egypt, the partial failure of his sight, and decay of his bodily powers, gave him warning that the day of his death could not be far off. He therefore sent for his son

* Hales, ii. pp. 141, 143.

Joseph, and expressed an earnest desire to lie with his fathers in the cave of Machpelah, and engaged his son to promise, by oath, that his remains should not be buried in Egypt, but carried to the promised land.

Joseph left his father, satisfied with this assurance, and returned home; but he was soon recalled by the intelligence that Jacob had fallen very ill, and seemed likely to die. This time he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. When Jacob heard that he was come, he exerted his remaining strength, and sat up in the bed to receive him; and the cheerfulness and force of expression with which he spoke to him, and, afterwards, to all his sons, shows that the inner lamp continued to burn brightly in him, however much his outward lights and powers had grown dim. He dwelt on the glorious promises of God to him, especially at Bethel, and made mention of the death of Rachel, for whose dear sake—which had first recommended Joseph himself to his peculiar love—he now proposed to give him a very strong mark of his regard. This was, to bestow on him, through his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, a double portion—the portion of the first-born—in that rich inheritance which awaited his race. Properly, they would only divide as grandsons the single share of their father; but he would adopt them among his own sons—and as such they should each receive a full portion, and be counted heads of tribes, even as Reuben, or Simeon, or any other of his sons. As Jacob could not see clearly, he had not hitherto observed that the lads of whom he spoke were present with their father; but now, perceiving that there were some persons with him, and being told who they were, he desired them to be brought nearer, that he might bless them. He kissed them, and embraced them; and said, tenderly, to Joseph, "I once thought that I should never see thy face; and, lo! God hath shown me also thy seed." In causing them to kneel before their reverend grandfather, Joseph placed the eldest, Manasseh, opposite his right hand, and Ephraim opposite his left; but Jacob crossed his hands, placing the right upon the head of the youngest, Ephraim, and the left upon the head of Manasseh; and when Joseph attempted to rectify what he supposed a mistake, his father persisted, telling him that he acted by the divine direction: and, in proceeding to bless them, which he did with great fervency and devotion, he not only preferred Ephraim to Manasseh, but gave him much the larger and nobler blessing. And how exactly this prophetic blessing of the two tribes, which Ephraim and Manasseh founded, the ensuing history will show.

After this, the aged patriarch, feeling his strength fail, and that the hour of his death approached, called all his sons together, that he might, severally, by that prophetic impulse which was upon him, tell them "what should befall them in the latter days." This he did in a noble poem—the most ancient which any language has preserved—describing the several characters of his sons, and the distinguishing features of their future possessions in the promised land, in language replete with the most beautiful and natural imagery, and alternately tender, pathetic, and stern. With what force and varied images does he, for instance, describe the sufferings and the glory of his beloved Joseph, and pray—

> "May the blessings of the heavens from above,
> The blessings of the low-lying deep,
> The blessings of the breasts and of the womb,
> The blessings of thy father and thy mother,
> With the blessings of the eternal mountains,
> The desirable things of the everlasting hills,
> Abound and rest upon the head of Joseph."

Jacob concluded with repeating to all his assembled sons the charge which he had already given to Joseph, separately, concerning his burial in the family sepulchre. He then laid himself down on the bed in which he had hitherto sat up, and gently died. And when Joseph saw that his father no longer lived, "he fell upon his face, and wept upon him, and kissed him."

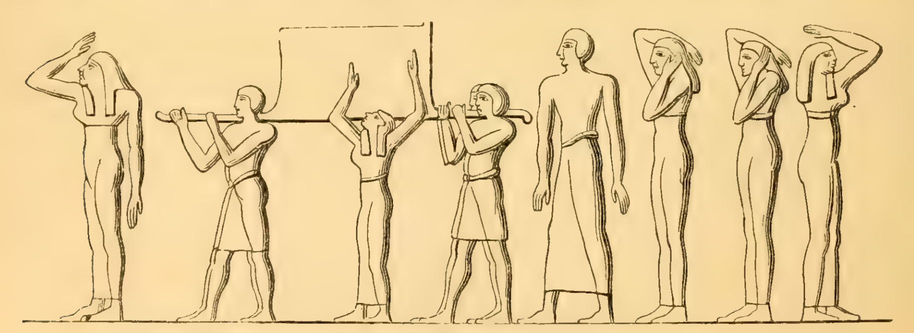
For a person in Joseph's station not to embalm his father, would have been considered a very heinous omission by the Egyptians, among whom he lived, and to whose general ideas and habits of life he conformed. The necessity of taking the body to Canaan would also recommend the adoption of this process. Joseph therefore "commanded his servants, the

physicians,([5]) to embalm his father," according to the fashion of the country, and doubtless in the most elaborate and costly of the various processes employed.

As the embalming took a considerable time, it appears to have been customary for the Egyptians to mourn for the dead while this operation was in progress, and till the body was deposited in its sepulchre; but not after that, as in other nations where death was sooner followed by interment. The mourning for Jacob lasted seventy days, and out of respect for the father of Joseph, it was a public mourning among the Egyptians.

After this, having obtained the king's consent, Joseph set forward to take the remains of his father to the sepulchre in Canaan, according to his promise. He was attended, not only by his own and his father's family, but by the chief officers of the royal household, and the grandees of the kingdom, who, in honour to Joseph, bore him company, and took a part in all the solemnities of his father's funeral. The cavalcade consisted of a great number of chariots and of horsemen, "so that they made a very great host." The principal persons were doubtless accompanied by their servants and followers, probably with some appearance of military array, for protection on the road. If our frequent preceding statements are right, the enemies they had most to dread were the Philistines, close to whose border, if not through whose country, they must have passed if they had taken the shortest and most obvious route to Mamre; and we imagine that the apprehension of an attack from that people explains a circumstance which no one has taken the trouble to notice, as requiring explanation, namely, that they went a great way about, across the desert, and by the way of Edom and Moab, and incurred the necessity of crossing the Jordan—for some reason which does not otherwise appear. In fact, the latter part of the route coincided with the latter part of that which, two centuries after, the Hebrew host took to avoid "the way of the Philistines." And, as it was, their way, till they entered Canaan, lay through the lands of tribes descended from Abraham and Isaac, who would be likely to respect the funeral solemnity of the patriarch.

After they had passed the Jordan, and had marched about three miles beyond it, into the plain of Jericho, they came to the large open threshing-ground of Atud, which, being level, and enclosed by a low wall, offered a convenient situation for a halt, and for the commencement of those funeral solemnities which they had made so long a journey to celebrate. Hitherto they had been making a journey; now, having entered the land, they commenced the funeral solemnities. During these seven days "they mourned with a great and very sore lamen-



[Part of an Egyptian Funeral Procession, with acts of mourning.]

tation; and in this act the Egyptians were, from their greater numbers and more marked form of wailing,* so conspicuous, that, when the inhabitants of the land witnessed the mourning in the floor of Atud, they said, "This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians;" and hence the place afterwards bore the name of Abel-Mitzraim.† There may have been some policy in commencing the funeral observances so immediately on entering the land of Canaan; for it

* When it was a public mourning, as for a king, they went about twice a-day in companies of two or three hundred, uttering doleful lamentation and chanting the praises of the deceased in mournful verse. Diodorus, i. 65.

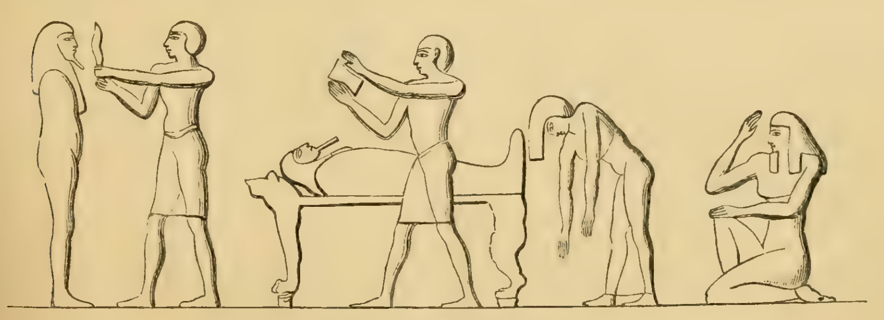
† The mourning of the Egyptians.

served to make their object known to the inhabitants, who might else have imagined that so formidable a company came with no peaceable intentions; and, attention being thus early drawn to their object, the people of the country, in all the way they had still to go, would be reminded that the sepulchre, to which the remains of the patriarch were thus honourably conveyed, belonged to a family absent in Egypt.

From the threshing-ground the cavalcade proceeded in solemn march to the vicinity of Hebron, where the sons of Jacob had the satisfaction of depositing the body of their father beside those of Abraham and Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, and Leah, in the cave of Machpelah. They then returned to Egypt.

While their father was alive, Joseph's brethren knew themselves to be secure; but now that he was dead they felt themselves wholly at his mercy, and concluded that he really hated them in his heart for the wrongs they had done to him, and would not be long in requiting them for their evil deeds. So much more ready was he to forgive than they to believe themselves forgiven; and so hard is it for a generous nature to be understood. They therefore sent a message to him, saying that Jacob, before he died, had told them to send to him, humbly confessing their sin against him, but entreating him to forgive the trespass of *the servants of his father's God*. We incline to think that this was an invention of their own; as it seems far more likely that Jacob would himself have charged Joseph on the subject, if *he* had entertained the suspicion that he still harboured resentment. Either way, the terms in which the message was conceived, and the force of its concluding expression, were well calculated to operate upon Joseph's heart. "If Joseph had been rancorous, this deprecation had charmed him; but now it resolves him into tears."* And when his brothers themselves came in and threw themselves at his feet, crying, "Behold, we are thy slaves!" he comforted them and spoke kindly to them, assuring them of his entire forgiveness and continued protection, and directing their attention away from themselves and their offence to the contemplation of that providence of God which his whole history, including that part of it, so strikingly manifested, and of which he himself constantly exhibits the most lively sense.

Joseph survived his father fifty-four years; but nothing further of his public or private history is told us. He died at the comparatively moderate age of 110 years, but lived to see the great-grand-children of Ephraim and the grand-children of Manasseh. But before his death he sent for his brothers, and, expressing his conviction that God certainly would, as he had promised, lead them forth in due season from that country, and give them possession of their inheritance in Canaan, he strictly charged them not to leave his bones in Egypt, but to bear them away to the promised land, when the time of their departure should come. The usages of Egypt made the accomplishment of this duty easy. His body was embalmed, and kept in a coffin or mummy-case, ready for that day which no man at that time living was destined to see. (6)



[A Mummy lying in its Case.]†

* Bishop Hall, b. iii. Cont. 5.

† The group in this cut is taken from a long piece representing the ceremonies of Egyptian burial. The mummy lies in its case upon a lion-shaped couch, as just before its removal for interment. The body of Joseph was probably kept in this manner, if not for the time deposited in a sepulchre. The women in the cut, in mourning postures, are probably the wife and nearest female relative of the deceased.

To conclude the history of Joseph, it may be as well to add here, that, when the house of Israel at last departed from Egypt, the promise made to him was not forgotten. They took his body with them, committing it to the care of the tribe of Ephraim, who bore about the precious charge many years, in all their wanderings, till they were enabled to deposit it in its appointed place, being that piece of ground near Shechem which Jacob bought for a hundred shekels of silver from the Shechemites, and which he bequeathed a little before his death to his son Joseph. This spot was included in the heritage of Ephraim ; and there, in a later day, a noble monument was erected to the memory of Joseph, which still existed in the time of Jerome.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES.

([1]) Slavery in Egypt, p. 114.—The first slaves were, doubtless, prisoners taken in war, who became the property of the captors. These at last found it advantageous to dispose of the services of their prisoners to others, who had not known them in war, or who knew nothing of them as enemies. In this began the trade in slaves. By the time to which we are now arrived, a step further, indeed the final step, had been made—that of buying up as slaves any persons offered for sale, not taken in war, or in any way offensively known—but solely as a trading speculation; the purchased person being conveyed to a distant market and sold at a profit. How rapidly this traffic grew, is strikingly intimated by one of the laws of Moses, which forbade any one Hebrew from stealing another, and selling him to a stranger.

Egypt has always been, and is to this day, a great market for slaves. And, as the form of the phrase "sold him to Potiphar" might suggest that this was a private transaction between him and the Arabian dealers, we have used the expression "exposed him for sale" in the text, in order to convey the impression which we ourselves entertain, without question, that Joseph was offered for sale in the public market, and was there purchased for Potiphar. The slave-markets were probably not very different from that of Cairo, the modern metropolis of Egypt, the scenes in which have so often been described by modern travellers; although we would fain hope that the revolting traffic was in ancient times conducted with more appearance of decency and humanity than is now witnessed. The following extract from Mr. Wilkinson's valuable work on the ancient Egyptians embodies most of the information on this subject which can be collected from the remains of that remarkable people :—

"The captives brought to Egypt were employed in the service of the monarch, in building temples, cutting canals, raising dykes and embankments, and other public works; and some, who were purchased by the grandees, were employed in the same capacity as the Memlooks of the present. Women slaves were also engaged in the service of families, like the Greeks and Circassians in modern Egypt and other parts of the Turkish empire; and, from finding them represented in the sculptures of Thebes, accompanying men of their own nation who bear tribute to the Egyptian monarch, we may conclude that a certain number were annually sent to Egypt from the conquered provinces of the north and east, as well as from Ethiopia. It is evident that both white and black slaves were employed as servants. They attended on the guests when invited to the house of their master; and, from their being in the families of priests, as well as of the military chiefs, we may infer that they were purchased with money, and that the right of possessing slaves was not confined to those who had taken them in war. The traffic in slaves was tolerated ; and it is reasonable to suppose that many persons were engaged, as at present, in bringing them to Egypt for public sale, independent of those who were sent as part of the tribute, and who were probably at first the property of the monarch. Nor did any difficulty occur to the Ishmaelites in the purchase of Joseph from his brethren, nor in his subsequent sale to Potiphar on arriving in Egypt."
—*Ancient Egyptians*, i. 403.

([2]) Potiphar's Office, p. 114.—There has been rather an amusing diversity of opinion respecting the offices which were borne by Joseph's master; and as, in the text, we have given him a new title, it may be necessary to advert slightly to the subject. Our own excellent translators exhibit more than usual doubt in this matter. In the text they call him "an officer of Pharaoh, and captain of the guard." But to the word "officer" they add

the marginal note "Heb. *eunuch;* but the word doth signify, not only *eunuchs*, but also *chamberlains, courtiers,* and *officers.* Esth. i. 10." We find, in fact, that the Septuagint translates the word סריס *saris*, by *eunuch*, and the Jews generally believe that Potiphar was actually an eunuch. The word does, indeed, mean an eunuch in its primary signification; but, seeing that such persons were generally employed about the royal palaces, and intrusted with their interior administration, the word came to signify a courtier, or palace officer, whether an eunuch or not. We are seldom able, when the word occurs in Scripture, to decide whether the original idea is retained or lost. The present seems to be one of the clearest cases; for that Potiphar was not an eunuch seems to be proved by his being married, although we must confess that this fact is not perfectly conclusive. It is, however, certain, from the sculptures, that eunuchism existed in the most ancient times in Egypt.* But, as we concur with our translators in this matter, we may turn to the other of Potiphar's titles, which is that which we have altered. In the text of our Bibles it stands "captain of the guard," for which, in the margin, not less than three alternatives are offered to us—"*chief of the slaughtermen*, or *executioners;* or *chief marshal.*"

The first is the *literal* meaning of the original words, and the others, as well as that in the text, are *interpretations* assigned to them. Other meanings have been given to them, such as "chief of the butchers," and "chief of the cooks." Now we have no objection to any of our Bible interpretations, separately taken; but none of them so taken will suggest an idea of Potiphar's probable office; and for this purpose it is necessary to *combine* in one as many as possible of the several ideas which these interpretations convey. For this purpose we have chosen to call Potiphar "chief of the royal police," not because the title quite answers this condition, but because it offers the only intelligible combination of terms we can invent to describe an office of which Europe has no knowledge. We collect it thus:—

He was undoubtedly the chief of the executioners; but this is a high office in the East, as a *court* office; for such executioners have nothing to do with the execution of the awards of the law in its ordinary course, but only with those of the king. It is thus an office of great responsibility; and to ensure its proper, and, if need be, prompt execution, it is intrusted to an officer of the court, who has necessarily under his command a body of men, whose duty it is to preserve the order and peace of the palace and its precincts, and to attend and guard the royal person on public occasions; and, under the direction of their chief, to inflict such punishment as the king awards upon those who incur his displeasure. He therefore, in this sense, may be called captain of the guard, or chief marshal, which last we think the best of the interpretations, next to that which we have ourselves chosen. Further, it appears that this officer had, adjoining to or connected with his house, a round building,* in which *the king's* prisoners—those who had incurred the royal suspicion or displeasure—were detained in custody till their doom should be determined. A functionary who combined these various duties in his person cannot perhaps be better described than by the title which we have given to him, "chief of the royal police."

If the view had been adopted that Potiphar was an eunuch, it might be mentioned as a remarkable coincidence that the chief of the black eunuchs under the Arabian khalifs was the royal executioner, and the head of the interior police of the palace. The personage so well known in Arabian tale, Mesroor, the chief of the black eunuchs to the Khalif Haroon Er-Rasheed, and, with the vizier, the constant companion of his rambles, was at the head of the interior police, in which character he was, officially, the royal executioner. Thus the vizier says to 'Alá ed-Deen,—"He who was speaking to you, and who has just now retired, is the Prince of the Faithful, Haroon Er-Rasheed, and I am the Vizier Jaafar, and this is Mesroor, the khalif's executioner."†

(3) EGYPTIAN EATING, p. 129.—The usages of the Egyptians in the matter of eating, as collected from the examination of the representations which occur in the painted tombs, throw considerable light on this and many other passages of the early Hebrew history and law. And this not only on those passages which afford distinct allusions to Egyptian customs, but from the indications which are offered, that many of them were adopted by the Hebrews; and not only by analogy, but by

* See the plate in 'Description de l'Egypte, Antiquités,' tome ii. pl. 12. This evidence, with which he ought to have been acquainted, quite nullifies the superficial cavils of M. ...ghellini, who, in his elaborate 'Examen du Mosaisme et du Christianisme,' displays twice the malice, without half the ability, of Voltaire or even of Paine.

* The original words denote that the prison was round, and appears to have been a round-house or round-tower—terms which some translators have employed.

† Lane's 'Arabian Nights,' vol. ii. p. 276.

antagonism; for there is no doubt that many of the regulations on this subject, which are contained in the law of Moses, are designedly levelled at Egyptian usages in eating, which were not considered suitable for the Hebrew people. We shall, therefore, in this note, collect from Mr. Wilkinson's large and very interesting statement on the subject * such particulars as seem in this point of view of the most importance.

As shown by the text to which this note is appended, and confirmed by the antiquities, an Egyptian dinner consisted of a considerable number of dishes, and the meat was killed for the occasion, as at the present day in eastern and tropical climates. If it was an entertainment to which guests were invited, they were in the interval amused with music and the dance, or passed the time in conversation.

In the mean time, the kitchen presented an animated scene; and the cook, with many assistants, was engaged in making ready the dinner. An ox, kid, wild goat, gazelle, or oryx, and a quantity of geese, ducks, widgeons, quails, or other birds, were obtained for the occasion. Pork was not eaten; and the use of mutton for the table is never indicated, and this confirms the testimony of Plutarch, who tells us that the flesh of the sheep was used for food in only one of the Egyptian nomes.† Beef and goose constituted the principal part of the animal food throughout Egypt; but the flesh of the *cow* was never eaten.

That a considerable quantity of meat was served up at those repasts to which strangers were invited, is evident from the sculptures, and agreeable to the customs of eastern nations, whose *azooma*, or feast, prides itself upon the quantity and variety of dishes, in the unsparing profusion of viands, and, wherever wine is permitted, in the freedom of the bowl. An endless succession of vegetables was also required on all occasions, and, when dining in private, dishes of that kind were in greater request than joints, even at the tables of the rich. We are therefore not surprised to find the Israelites, who, by their long residence there, had acquired similar habits, regretting them equally with the meat and fish ‡ which they "did eat in Egypt freely;" and the advantages of a leguminous diet are still acknowledged by the inhabitants of modern Egypt. This, in a hot climate, is far more conducive to health than the constant introduction of meat, which is principally used as a flavour to the vegetables cooked with it; and if, at an eastern feast a greater quantity of meat is introduced, the object is rather to do honour to the guests, who, in most countries, and in all ages, have been welcomed by an encouragement of excess, and a display of such things as show a desire on the part of the host to spare no expense in the entertainment. The same custom prevailed with the ancient Egyptians; and their mode of eating was very similar to that now adopted at Cairo, and throughout the East; each person sitting round a table, and dipping his hand into a dish placed in the centre, removed on a sign made by the host, and succeeded by others whose rotation depends on established rule, and whose number is pre-determined, according to the size of the party or the quality of the guests.

Among the lower orders, vegetables constituted a very great part of their ordinary food; and they gladly availed themselves of the variety and abundance of the esculent roots growing spontaneously on the lands irrigated by the rising Nile, as soon as its waters had subsided; some of which were eaten in a crude state, and others roasted in the ashes, boiled, or stewed; their chief aliment consisting of milk and cheese, roots, leguminous, cucurbitaceous, and other plants, and ordinary fruits of the country. Among these vegetables there is one which requires particular observation. This is the onion, which, Juvenal says, the Egyptians were forbidden to eat; but Plutarch restricts this abstinence to the sacerdotal order. That onions were cultivated in Egypt is proved by the authority of many writers, as well as from the sculptures. Their quality was renowned, both in ancient and modern times; and the Israelites, when they left the country, regretted "the onions," as well as the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the garlick, and the meat,* which they "did eat" in Egypt. The sculptures frequently represent the priests as laying bundles of onions upon the altars for offerings. They were also introduced at private as well as public festivals, and brought to table with gourds, cucumbers, and other vegetables. The onions of Egypt were mild, and of an excellent flavour, and were eaten raw, as well as cooked, by persons both of the higher and lower classes.

In slaughtering for the table, it was customary to take the ox, or whatever animal had been chosen for the occasion, into a court-yard near the house, to tie its four legs together, and then to throw it upon the ground,† in which position it was held by one or more persons, while the butcher, sharpening his

* 'Ancient Egyptians,' ii. 364-409.
† Plut. de Isid. s. 72.
‡ Num. xi. 4, 5.

* Num. xi. 5, and Exod. xvi. 3.
† See the cut at p. 129.

broad knife upon a steel attached to his apron, proceeded to cut the throat, as nearly as possible, from one ear to the other, sometimes continuing the incision downwards along the throat. This is the manner in which animals are still slaughtered throughout Western Asia; and, no doubt, generally among the ancient Hebrews; for we suppose the striking off of the animal's head at once, as described in the ceremonies for the expiation of an uncertain murder,* had a significant reference to the particular occasion, and was not used in slaughter for the table. Among the Egyptians the blood was frequently received into a basin, for the purposes of cookery. This was repeatedly forbidden to the Israelites by the law of Moses;† and the reason for the urgency of the prohibition is found in the necessity of preventing them from adopting a custom which they had constantly witnessed, or rather, probably, from continuing one which they had practised, in Egypt. Nor is this custom less strictly denounced by the Mohammedan religion; and all Moslems look upon this ancient Egyptian and modern European custom with unqualified horror and disgust.

After this the head was taken off, and the animal skinned, commencing with the leg and neck. The first joint removed was the right fore-leg or shoulder, whether for the table or the altar; and it is remarkable that this first-separated joint is that which, under the law of Moses, became the due of the priest in all peace-offerings.‡ The other parts followed in succession, according to custom or convenience. Servants carried the joints to the kitchen on wooden trays, and the cook, having selected the parts suited for boiling, roasting, and other modes of dressing, prepared them for the fire by washing, and any other preliminary process he thought necessary. In large kitchens the head-cook had several persons under him, who were required to make ready and boil the water of the cauldron, to put the joints on spits or skewers, to cut up or mince the meat, to prepare the vegetables, and to fulfil various other duties assigned them.

The mode of cutting up the meat was so different from ours as sometimes to prevent our recognising the exact part which the sculptures intend to represent.

The same mode of slaughtering and preparing the joints extended to all the larger animals; but geese, and other wild and tame fowl, were served up entire, or at least only deprived of their feet and pinion joints. Fish were also brought to table whole, whether boiled or fried, save that the tails and fins were removed.

We cannot follow our authority into the details of the cooking operations; but must return to the party which we left waiting for their dinner. Sherbets* and other light refreshments were handed round to the assembled guests, while the meal was in preparation.

Dinner, as we have seen in the text, was served up at noon; but it is likely that the Egyptians, like the ancient Romans and modern Orientals, and, indeed like ourselves, for our late "dinner" is such, had a full supper in the evening. The table, as shown in the cut at p. 130, was very similar to that still used in Egypt and Western Asia, being a small stool supporting a round tray on which the dishes were placed, together with loaves of bread, some of which were apparently not unlike those of the present day, flat and round, as our crumpets, and others in the form of rolls or cakes sprinkled with seeds. Occasionally each guest had a table to himself, as seems to have been the case in that entertainment of which the text takes notice.

The tables, as at a Roman repast, were occasionally brought in and removed with the dishes on them; sometimes each joint was served up separately, and the fruit, deposited in a plate or trencher, succeeded the meat at the close of the dinner; and in less fashionable circles, particularly of the olden time, it was brought in baskets, which stood beside or under the table, of which two instances are offered in an engraving. The Egyptians, like the Jews, were particularly fond of figs and grapes. The sycamore fig was highly esteemed. Fresh dates during their season, and in a dried state at other periods of the year, were also brought to table, as well as a preserve of the fruit still common in Egypt and Arabia.

The guests sat on the ground, or on stools or chairs; and, having neither knives nor forks, nor any substitute for them, they ate with their fingers like the modern Asiatics, and, like them, invariably with the right hand. Spoons were introduced when soups or other liquids required their use, and perhaps even a knife was employed on some occasions to facilitate the carving of a large joint, which is sometimes done in the East at the present day.

* Deut. xxi. 4, 6.

† Lev. xvii. 10, 11, 14, &c.; Deut. xii. 16, 23; xv. 23.

‡ Lev. vii. 32.

* Mr. Wilkinson says "wine," and we dissent with extreme diffidence; but, from the large size of the vessel which is offered, and from other circumstances, we judge that the before-dinner beverage was not wine, but some pleasant acidulated drink or sherbet, such as the dreams which Joseph interpreted in prison, seem to represent the king himself as taking before dinner.

The preceding facts will make the particulars in the cuts which we have introduced* more clear to the reader; but it may be desirable to specify that in the last and largest engraving, the first and last of the men are taking up figs to eat, the third pulls off the wing of a goose, the fourth applies an entire joint to his mouth, the fifth and seventh are eating fish, and the sixth drinks water from an earthen vessel.

([4]) Carts, p. 131.—The Egyptians had no chariots, except perhaps war-chariots, suited to bear such a journey as this, and they would have been most unsuitable for the present purpose. Besides, the word for a chariot is different from that which is here employed, although a wheel-carriage of some kind or other is certainly indicated. To indicate that carriage we have taken the word "cart," as preferable, upon the whole, to that of "waggon"—partly as being less definite. But it does not appear that the Egyptians had any carts, or any wheeled carriages save chariots of war, and light curricles for civil use. The Nile and the numerous canals offered such facilities for carriage and conveyance by water, that the use of carts and waggons does not appear to have been thought of. Carts are indeed represented in the paintings and sculptures of that ancient country; but not as being in use among the Egyptians themselves, but by a people with whom they are at war, apparently a nomade people of Asia, and who are represented as escaping in their carts. Such are those represented in our first wood-cut—none of which are Egyptian, though all copied from Egyptian remains. The hindermost of these is rather a chariot than a cart, though its body has a cart-like shape. Now, we infer that as the Egyptians had no carts of their own; those which were sent for Jacob were such as they had either taken in war from a people by whom they were used, or had been left behind by the intrusive shepherd-race. As having been used by a pastoral people, they would seem to the king particularly suitable for the removal of a pastoral family. In connection with preceding statements, and with the conjecture just offered, it deserves to be noticed that the next instance of carts which occurs in the Scriptural history is found among the Philistines.† The second of our engravings represents the only kind of wheel-carriage now used in Syria, and that chiefly for agricultural purposes. The third represents the carts of the Tartar nomades of Central Asia, whose usages have been already mentioned by us as offering many remarkable resemblances to those of the patriarchs and the early pastoral races with which the early Bible history makes us acquainted.

* At pages 118, 129, and 130.

† 1 Sam. vi. 7.

([5]) Egyptian Physicians, p. 136.—From this it appears that the art of embalming was regarded as a branch of the medical profession. We shall not here add anything on the subject of embalming to the information which has been given in different parts of a former work.* But, as the first historical mention of physicians occurs in this place, and as the Jews appear to have derived from the Egyptians the very little they ever knew of medical science and practice, the following particulars on that subject may be usefully introduced. They are condensed chiefly from a larger statement by Mr. Wilkinson.†

We suppose that Joseph's "servants, the physicians," were rather those who were employed by him as occasion required, than engaged exclusively in his service. There is a peculiar propriety in the use of the plural "physicians," for no family in Egypt could manage with the services of one only. Matters were so arranged by the Egyptians—and Herodotus regarded it as a proof of their great attention to health, and of their wisdom—that no doctor was allowed to practise any but one branch of the profession. Some were oculists, who only studied diseases of the eye; others attended solely to complaints of the head; others to those of the teeth; some again confined themselves to complaints of the intestines; and others to secret and internal maladies: accoucheurs being usually, if not always women.

The previous study for the profession consisted in acquiring an acquaintance with the rules established and the practice followed by their ancestors; for it was believed that, while much danger might ensue to patients from rash experiments, few persons could be capable of introducing any new treatment superior to that which had been sanctioned and approved by the skill of the old practitioners. Hence a doctor was adjudged to be guilty of a capital offence if his patient died under any other medical treatment than that which precedent warranted.

The medical profession, as a body, was paid by the government; but they were not thereby precluded from receiving fees, except on a foreign journey or on military service, when patients were visited free of expense.

* 'The Pictorial Bible.'

† 'Ancient Egyptians,' iii. 389-397.

These particulars have been preserved by Diodorus,* who further informs us that the Egyptians held most diseases to arise from indigestion and excess in eating, and therefore had frequent recourse to abstinence, emetics, slight doses of medicine, and other simple means of relieving the system. It is also stated by Herodotus that the inhabitants of the corn country physicked themselves for three successive days every month—submitting to a regular course of medicine, in the way of prevention. The employment of numerous drugs in Egypt has been mentioned by sacred and profane writers; and the medicinal properties of many herbs which grow between the Nile and the Red Sea is still known to the Arabs, though their application has been but imperfectly recorded and preserved. "O virgin, daughter of Egypt," says Jeremiah, "in vain shalt thou use many medicines, for thou shalt not be cured."† And Homer‡ describes Egypt as "a country whose fertile soil produces an infinity of drugs, some salutary and some pernicious; where each physician possesses knowledge above all other men."

The members of the profession were very numerous. Herodotus says (ii. 84) that every place was full of them; and Pliny, at a later date, confirms his testimony. The last-named writer also takes notice of their skill, and intimates that they examined bodies after death to ascertain the nature of the diseases of which they had died.§ The medical skill of the Egyptians was well known in foreign countries, and must have been quite familiar to the Jews; and the physicians to whom Asa resorted were probably of that country.

Dreams, as we have recently seen, were regarded by the Egyptians with religious reverence; and they believed that the prayers of the devout were often rewarded by the indication in them of the remedies which their case required; but it seems that this and magic were only a last resource, when the skill of the physician had been baffled, and all hope of recovery by human means was lost; and a similar superstitious feeling led them to present votive offerings to the temples for the same purpose. The Jews were, however, disposed to reverse this order, and to look to the physician as the last resource.

(6) JOSEPH'S COFFIN, p. 137.—The body of Joseph was, doubtless, dealt with like those of Egyptians of rank. Under this treatment, the body, after being embalmed, was completely swathed with strips of linen [some think cotton] cloth, of various length and breadth, and was then enclosed in an envelope of coarse, or sometimes of fine, cloth. In Mr. Davidson's mummy the weight of the bandages, including the outer sheet, was 29lbs., and their total length 292 yards; and in another, Mr. Pettigrew's, the cloth weighed 35½lbs.; and the one examined at Leeds was in no part covered with less than forty thicknesses of the cloth. The mummy thus prepared, with its envelope, presents the appearance of a large mass of cloth, somewhat resembling the general outline of the human figure. The mummy was thus prepared by the embalmers, and in this state consigned to the coffin-makers, who, in the first instance, enclosed it in a case of a strong, but flexible kind of board, something like *papier mâche*, made by gumming well together several layers of hempen or linen cloth. This was formed into the shape of the swathed mummy, which was inserted into it by means of a longitudinal slit, on the under side, reaching from the feet to the head, which was stitched up after the insertion of the mummy. This case is, in most instances, lined, and covered with a thin coating of plaster, with the representation of a human face on the upper part. This was then introduced into a coffin of sycamore wood, made sometimes out of one piece of wood, and either plain or ornamented within and without, with representations of sacred animals, or mythological subjects. Besides this there is often yet another wooden coffin, still more highly ornamented, and covered with paintings secured by a strong varnish. The upper part of both these cases is made to represent a human figure, and the sex is clearly denoted by the character of the head-dress, and by the presence or absence of the beard.

The last covering of all was a sarcophagus of stone, which, from its heavy additional expense, could only, it may be supposed, be used for kings and wealthy people. These stone coffins consist of two parts,—a case to contain the body, formed of one piece of stone, open at the top, and a lid to fit the opening. Some of them are comparatively plain, while others—of which there are examples in the British Museum, and one, of alabaster, in the Museum of Sir John Soane—are elaborately sculptured with hieroglyphics and figures of men and animals,* forming not the least astonishing monuments which we possess of Egyptian industry and art.

This brief account of Egyptian coffins we

* 'Bibliotheca', i. 82. † Jer. lxvi. 11.
‡ Odyss. iv. 229. § Hist. Nat. xxi. 5.

* In the most remarkable of the sarcophagi in the Museum, the superfice sculptured is more than 100 feet square (French), and the number of characters exceeds 21,700.

have drawn from the more extensive statement in the instructive chapter on 'Mummies,' in the 'Egyptian Antiquities,' of the Useful Knowledge Society; and is chiefly intended to give the requisite explanation of the figures in the annexed engraving, which offers specimens of all the different varieties of the Egyptian mummy cases and sarcophagi.

It seems not unlikely that the remains of Joseph were kept in a stone sarcophagus while in Egypt, and were taken out and removed in one or more wooden coffins, when the Israelites departed from Egypt. An Arabian writer,* who could, however, know no more about it than we do, entertained the same impression, and states that the remains of Joseph were deposited in a marble coffin, and cast into the Nile,—the last particular being derived from one of the wonderful stories of the Rabbins, concerning the preservation of Joseph's body. Their most common account is, that the coffin of Joseph was at first deposited in the royal sepulchre; but that, when the Hebrews demanded leave to depart, the magicians came to the then reigning king, and told him that, if he was minded to keep the Hebrews in his dominions, the best course would be to conceal the body of Joseph in some place where they could not possibly find it, as they would certainly not leave the country without it; and that, in pursuance of this advice, it was sunk in the bed of the Nile, and that a miracle was effected, to enable Moses to recover it, and carry it away.* Another account alleges that the coffin was deposited in the treasury of the kings, in consequence of a prediction by the magicians, that if the Hebrews got possession of it, and carried it away, Egypt would be involved in a multitude of calamities.† The truth probably is, that the sarcophagus, containing the body of Joseph, was kept in a sepulchre in the land of Goshen, in charge of his family, and that no difficulty was experienced in its removal when the time of deliverance came.

* Patricides, p. 24, apud Hottinger. Smegma Oriental. c. viii. p. 379.

* Talm. Bab. Sotah, c. i. fol. 13. 1. Targum Jonath. in loc.
† Test. xii. Patriarchæ, in Simeone.



[Mummy Cases and Marble Sarcophagi.]

CHAPTER II.

THE BONDAGE.



[Eelauts in Persia.*]

The history and chronology of the period immediately following the death of Joseph is involved in great obscurity, which there is only some faint hope of seeing dispelled, through the information which is in the course of being painfully collected from the graven monuments of ancient Egypt.

The interval between the death of Joseph and the birth of Moses is set down by Dr. Hales at 65 years. The history of this period is given by the sacred writer in a very few words. He commences by enumerating, once more, the sons of Jacob, and then informs us that they and all the men of their generation died before the affliction of the Hebrews in Egypt com-

* In this cut the woman in the foreground is employed in baking bread at the very usual kind of oven—a hole in the ground. The other women are weaving. Both are the principal employments of women among pastoral tribes, and were such among the Hebrews; and we make no question that the oven in the one case, and the loom in the other, are of just the same sort as they employed. It will be remembered that the hangings for the tabernacle were woven, by the women, in the wilderness.

menced. Stephen appears to intimate (Acts vii. 16) that they were all taken to be buried in the ground at Shechem, but whether immediately after death, or whether their bodies were kept, like that of Joseph, to be carried thither at a future day, we are not told. The remarkable increase of the Israelites in Egypt is then described with a remarkable amplification of terms:—"They were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty, and the land was filled with them." That God had promised this, sufficiently acounts for it: and, acting as usual through natural agencies, he had placed them in a land of abundance, finely watered, and under a warm climate,—in a country where the females, both of the human species and of animals, have ever been reputed to exceed all others in fruitfulness. It can also be shown that the children of Israel now married very early, while the duration of life still greatly exceeded that to which it has since fallen. All these circumstances contributed more or less to the important result, and, together, adequately account for it, without the need of that directly miraculous aid which the Jewish writers claim; but which we know was never needlessly employed when the Divine blessing upon existing causes sufficed for the required effect.

There is one matter, concerning which further information than we possess would be very gratifying: this is respecting the precise situation which Joseph's family occupied after his death, and how far it was affected by the high station their father had occupied, and by their maternal derivation from a distinguished family in Egypt. Born in that country and brought up in courts and palaces, under an Egyptian mother, their pastoral relatives from Canaan must at first have been strangers and foreigners to Ephraim and Manasseh. And from this the question arises, at what time and under what circumstances, the family of Joseph threw aside their Egyptian character, and joined themselves to their pastoral brethren in Goshen. We find no answer to this: but we may be sure that Joseph taught his sons to regard the prospects which that connection opened, as more truly glorious than any which Egypt could offer to them. The intermediate position and parentage of this family was probably for a time made instrumental in confirming the advantages which the Hebrews enjoyed in Egypt; and when circumstances arose which compelled them to take a more determined position, as Hebrews or as Egyptians—if they had not spontaneously done so before—we know, from the result, that they hesitated not to unite themselves to the sojourners in Goshen. All the positive information concerning them which we can find is contained in the genealogies with which the books of Chronicles open. From this source we learn that Manasseh had no children by his wife, but the son of a Syrian concubine was his heir.* The only other circumstance with which we are thus made acquainted relates to the tribe of Ephraim, and is interesting as showing, not only that this tribe entered into the Bedouin character with great spirit, but as perhaps evincing that the Hebrews in Goshen understood and entered into the Egyptian policy, as against the Philistines, with which the occupation of that land had been assigned to them. A body of Ephraimites, headed by the sons of Zabad, the sixth in descent from Ephraim, undertook a kind of freebooting expedition into the land of the Philistines, with the immediate view of driving off the cattle belonging to the people of Gath; but they were resisted by the Philistines and repulsed with much slaughter, and Zabad lost all his sons.† This was exactly such an expedition as Bedouin pastors are at this day prone to undertake; and, considering that it was undertaken in the most bitter days of the "bondage," it lays open certain inferences which we shall presently deduce from it: while it may probably have been entered upon with the view of convincing the Egyptians that no such good understanding existed between them and the Philistines, as appears to have been made one of the reasons or pretences for their oppression.

Towards the latter end of the interval between Joseph and Moses we are told that "another king arose who knew not Joseph." In such a country as Egypt, this, with the resulting consequences, must imply something more than the mere succession of one king of the same

* 1 Chron. vii. 14.

† 1 Chron. vii. 21, 22. In the text, as it stands, the name of Ephraim has been substituted for that of Zabad in the verse. "And Ephraim their father mourned many days, and his brethren came to comfort him." It is impossible that Ephraim should then have been alive to mourn over the *seventh* generation of his descendants. Read 'Zabad,' and all becomes intelligible.

family to another,—it must imply a change of dynasty; and not only such a change, but that the new dynasty was not native to that kingdom which Joseph had saved, and the condition of which was still materially affected by the measures he had taken. This has been so strongly felt, that there has been a general disposition to consider that the change consisted in the intrusion of the shepherd-race, to which " the king who knew not Joseph" belonged. But this conclusion is no longer tenable: for a close examination of the historical evidence demonstrates that the shepherd-race had been *expelled* from Egypt before the time of Joseph; and this is confirmed beyond dispute by the graven testimony which the old monuments of that country now offer. The new dynasty must, therefore, be sought in another quarter.

After an anxious survey of the thick clouds which hang over the chronology of this period, for some ray of light which might guide through its utter darkness, we turn away as disappointed as all our predecessors. Nothing, therefore, remains for us but to make such accommodations, and so to balance the various difficulties, as to obtain the result which, without being certain of its truth, seems the best and the most probable under all the circumstances.

It has been our earnest desire to avail ourselves of the facts, few though they be, which the long and well-directed researches of Mr. Wilkinson have enabled him to collect from the graven muniments of Egypt. But it has also been our purpose to use the dates which are assigned by Hales to the principal events recorded in the Scriptures; and how it is possible to use *both* is a question of serious difficulty,—seeing that the chronology of Hales differs considerably from that in common use, which Wilkinson has adopted,—from which it necessarily happens that circumstances, which apply very well under the received chronology, lose their Scriptural connection when the dates of Hales are applied to them. To illustrate this by an example. According to Wilkinson the reign of Osirtasen I. commenced in 1740, B.C., and continued for at the least 43 years. Now, according to the common Bible chronology, which Mr. Wilkinson adopts, " the arrival of Jacob "* took place in the year 1706, whence he necessarily infers that this Osirtasen is the " Pharaoh " whom the history of Joseph makes known so favourably to us. But, according to Hales, this date for Jacob's arrival is wrong, and should be 1863; so that then the arrival of Jacob would appear to have preceded the *commencement* of Osirtasen's reign by 123 years, whence it would result that this monarch, instead of being the patron of Joseph, and he who gave to the house of Israel a possession in Egypt, would turn out to be the very king " that knew not Joseph," and he who commenced the oppression of the Hebrew race. Here is a very grave difficulty, which is not at all lessened by the fact that " the names and era of the monarchs before Osirtasen I. are uncertain. Very few monuments remain of a date prior to his reign; but the names of many kings occur in the sculptures as his predecessors."†

Now the scriptural dates of Hales are too clearly established, for their relinquishment or modification to be thought of, even for the sake of the benefit which might be derived from the Egyptian facts collected by Wilkinson. Yet these facts are so much more in agreement with the Hebrew history of the time than any information we previously possessed, that, while still adhering to our preference of Hales's dates, we should sincerely regret this consequence of that preference. The only course by which an accommodation could be effected, would be by carrying back the reign of Osirtasen to the time which Hales assigns to the elevation of Joseph; thus erasing the discrepancy of 123 years. To most of our readers this may seem too bold and unwarrantable an operation: but to those who know the uncertainty in which the profane chronology of those times is involved, and the ease with which centuries are bandied about by the chronologers ‡ to suit their occasions, nothing would seem easier than to make such an alteration for the sake of accommodating circumstances.

* Mr. W. has "arrival of *Joseph*" in both his 'Egypt and Thebes' and 'Ancient Egyptians.' But this is a palpable slip of the pen for *Jacob*.

† 'Egypt and Thebes,' 509, *note*.

‡ Mr. Wilkinson himself furnishes an instance of this. In his 'Egypt and Thebes,' being restricted by the low date ascribed by the common chronology to the Deluge, he gives to Menes the date of 2201, yet wishing he could carry it higher. In his later work, he does carry it higher, raising the date to 2320; while Hales, whose widening of the interval relieves him from any fear of interfering with the Deluge, goes back so far, in this same date, as 2412. If Mr. W. had taken the same date, and had raised those that follow in proportion, his date for the reign of Osirtasen would nearly synchronise with that which Hales gives to Joseph's elevation.

It must not for an instant be supposed that Mr. Wilkinson's collective dates have the authority which they would have, if taken directly from sculptured monuments. This is very far from being the case. His best materials for a chronological table consist of names of kings, with the duration of their reigns, as given by the sculptures. If we had an unbroken and complete series of these names,—if we could be certain that they did not sometimes, like the duration under particular circumstances of royal reigns in the Bible, run into one another,—and if the new branch of learning which involves the right understanding of these inscriptions were in a more advanced state,—it might be easy to obtain some certain results by reckoning the intervals backward or forward from any *ascertained* point. But as none of these conditions are answered; and as, above all, the want of a complete series of these names and eras makes it necessary to help out the calculation by including the estimate of average durations, as well as by introducing an interpretation of the differently interpreted eras of Manetho, a tolerably fair approximation is the most that can be expected. And when we further consider that no fixed point from which to reckon back, in the construction of a chronological table from these materials, occurs earlier than the contemporary reigns of Shishak and Solomon; and that in the backward computation, with the check of the vulgar era for the Deluge, there is the constant disposition to "pare the times to the quick," from the fear, avowed by Mr. Wilkinson, of interfering with that event,—then it may appear that even such a difference as 123 years does not offer an insurmountable obstacle to the adoption of Mr. Wilkinson's historical data. In introducing his chronological table, he says himself, "the contemporary reigns of Shishak and Solomon afford the earliest fixed epoch for the construction of a chronological table; but reckoning back the number of the years of each king's reign, either according to Manetho, the dates on the monuments, or the average length of their ordinary duration, we may arrive at a fair approximation. . . . . But I offer this table with great deference, and shall willingly yield to any opinion that may be established on more positive and authentic grounds."*

Upon the whole, we incline to think it possible that, through the constant operation of a disposition to narrow and keep down the intervals, in reckoning them backward from Shishak, from the fear of ultimately getting into too close an approximation with the Deluge, Mr. Wilkinson may very well be supposed to have lost the century which is wanting to make the times of Joseph and Osirtasen synchronise, and to produce a correspondence between the Egyptian and Hebrew history of the ensuing years. The preceding explanation is designed to excuse or justify this assumption, which offers the only available alternative on which we can proceed without entirely foregoing the benefit of that correspondence of events which he has indicated. But this is still a course to which we are rather constrained by the urgency of circumstances, than one which, had any other alternative been open, we should willingly have chosen.

Now then, assuming that, notwithstanding the difference of dates, Osirtasen I. really was, as Mr. Wilkinson conceives, the Pharaoh whom the history of Joseph makes so favourably known to us, we may proceed to state that this monarch belonged to a dynasty of Tanites—taking its name from Tanis, the Zoan of the Hebrew Scriptures. The information concerning this and the other sovereigns whom we have to mention, is derived from the sculptured scenes of war, or of regal, civil, or domestic life, which belong to their several reigns. With respect to Osirtasen I., Mr. Wilkinson observes, "If the name of this monarch was not ennobled by military exploits equal to those of Remeses, the encouragement given to the arts of peace, and the flourishing state of Egypt during his rule, evince his wisdom; and his pacific character satisfactorily accords with that of the Pharaoh who so generously rewarded the talents and fidelity of a Hebrew stranger." It is important to notice that, whereas in former times Egypt appears to have been divided into two distinct states, each of which had its own king, the whole had, in or before his time, been consolidated into one monarchy: for the title, "lord of the upper and lower country," affixed to his name, evinces that Osirtasen was the sole monarch of the Thebaid and Lower Egypt; as does also the presence of his name on a colonnade of the great temple at Karnak. There were two other kings of this dynasty, both of the name of Amun-m-gori; and it terminated some years before the death of

* 'Egypt and Thebes,' 506, 507.

Joseph, who may, with great probability, be supposed to have taken the opportunity of retiring from public life; although as the succeeding dynasty was of Memphis, and could not be unacquainted with his services, and with the true character of the circumstances under which the house of Israel obtained a dwelling-place in Egypt, it is not likely that the change made any alteration in their position. Of the kings of these two dynasties, after Osirtasen I., the most remarkable were Amun-m-gori II., in whom the Tanite dynasty terminated, and Osirtasen II., with whom the Memphite dynasty commenced. "Independent of the encouragement given by them to the agricultural interests of the country, they consulted the welfare of those who were employed in the inhospitable desert; and the erection of a temple and a station to command the wells, and to serve for their abode in Wady Jasoos, proved that they were mindful of their spiritual as well as temporal protection. The breccia quarries of the Kossayr* road were already opened, and probably also the emerald mines of Gebel Zabara."† The Memphite dynasty lasted 71 years, terminating 60 years after the death of Joseph, and four years (according to Wilkinson) before the birth of Moses. The next dynasty was of Thebes, and, as such, may be concluded to have been comparatively ignorant of the transactions in Lower Egypt in which Joseph took so conspicuous a part.

The scriptural narrative goes on to tell us that "there arose a new king [or dynasty] over Egypt, who knew not Joseph." Now this new king is regarded by Mr. Wilkinson as Amosis, the first monarch of this Theban dynasty. He says,—"Amosis or Ames was the leader of the eighteenth dynasty; and the period of his accession and this change in the reigning family strongly confirms the opinion of his being the new king who knew not Joseph. And if we consider that he was from the distant province of Thebes, it is reasonable to expect that the Hebrews would be strangers to him, and that he was likely to look upon them with the same distrust and contempt with which the Egyptians usually treated foreigners. They stigmatised them with the name of impure Gentiles; and the ignoble occupation of shepherds was for the Jews an additional cause of reproach.‡ Indeed, it is possible that the Jews, who had come to Egypt on the occasion of the famine, finding the great superiority of the land of Egypt, both for obtaining the necessaries of life and for feeding their flocks, may have asked and obtained a grant of land from the Egyptian monarch, on condition of certain services being performed by them and their descendants.§ As long as the Memphite dynasty continued on the throne, this grant was respected, and the only service required of them was that agreed upon in the original compact. But on the accession of the Theban family, the grant being rescinded, and the service still required, they were reduced to a state of bondage; and, as despotism seldom respects the rights of those it injures, additional labour was imposed upon this unresisting people.‖ And Pharaoh's pretended fear, lest in the event of war they might make common cause with the enemy, was a sufficient pretext with his own people for oppressing the Jews, at the same time that it had the effect of exciting their prejudices against them. Affecting, therefore, some alarm at their numbers, he suggested that so numerous a body might avail themselves of the absence of the Egyptian troops, and endanger the safety and tranquillity of the country,¶ and that prudence dictated the necessity of obviating the possibility of such an occurrence. With this view they were treated like captives taken in war, and were forced to undergo the gratuitous labour of erecting public granaries and other buildings for the Egyptian monarch. These were principally constructed of crude brick; and

* Usually spelled "Cosseir." † 'Ancient Egyptians,' i. 45.

‡ We are not clear that Mr. W. penetrates the real reasons of the Egyptian antipathy to *tent-dwelling* shepherds. These have been explained by us in p. 35. There were grounds for this antipathy common to all the Egyptians, without any reference to the intrusive shepherd dynasty; and although the rule of that dynasty was confined to Lower Egypt, there can be no doubt that Upper Egypt was sufficiently inconvenienced, by their occupation of the lower country, to give intensity to even their hatred of the shepherd name.

§ Some of them were tillers of the land as well as shepherds: for, besides their labour "in mortar and in brick," they were employed in "all manner of service in the field." (Exod. i. 14.) And in Deut. x. 11 we find this expression, "Egypt . where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it."

‖ The Arabs, whenever they become settled in villages on the banks of the Nile, meet with much vexation from the Turkish authorities, and the Turks are always anxious they should fix themselves in villages, in order to get them within their power.—*Wilkinson.*

¶ From Exod. i. 10, it is evident that he did not fear their obtaining possession of any part of Egypt; but of their committing depredations and then *escaping* out of the country.—*Wilkinson.*

that such materials were commonly used in Egypt we have sufficient proof from the walls and other buildings of great size and solidity found in various parts of the country, many of which are of a very early period; and the bricks themselves, both at Thebes and in the vicinity of Memphis, bear the names of the monarch who ruled Egypt during and prior to the period to which I am now alluding. The crude brick remains about Memphis are principally pyramids; those at Thebes consist of walls enclosing sacred monuments and tombs, and some are made with and others without straw. Many have chopped barley and wheat straw, others bean-halm, and stubble;* and in the tombs we find the process of making them represented among the sculptures. But it is not to be supposed that any of these bricks are the work of the Israelites, who were never occupied at Thebes; and although Josephus affirms that they were engaged in building pyramids as well as in making canals and embankments, it is very improbable that the crude brick pyramids of Memphis, or of the Arsinoïte nome, were the work of the Hebrew captives."

The idea of Mr. Wilkinson, that there was an original agreement for certain services to be performed by Jacob's family and their descendants, is, as far as we know, a new one. We do not think that this, under all the circumstances, as recorded in the book of Genesis, is very likely; unless to this extent, that there was an understood condition,—that the Hebrews were to guard that part of the open frontier committed to them, against the intrusion of other shepherd races, and especially against the Philistines. In fact, although the Hebrews themselves knew, from prophecy, that they were to make a considerable stay in Egypt, and grow there into a nation, it is not clear that the Egyptians themselves had at first any such expectation or intention, and without it they were most unlikely to stipulate for any services to be performed. The family of Jacob came to be nourished during the years of famine; and a district was assigned them, in which they might stay with their flocks and herds. Their longer stay was probably not expected. But when the years of plenty came, the influence of Joseph, joined, probably, to the experience of the usefulness of their presence on that frontier, would prevent the attempt, or perhaps even the wish, to require their removal: and it was only when,—under a new dynasty, which cared little for the services which Joseph had rendered to the state,—the length of their stay seemed to intimate that they were likely to become a fixed part of the population, and when the rapid increase in their numbers brought their position strongly before the government,—that any strong measures were taken with them, or any attempt made to exact services from them. The Egyptian government was right in directing its attention to a subject of this importance, with the view of taking such measures as the security of the country might seem to require. But the measures which it did take—however right in abstract policy—were wrong and bad, because they were unjust. The Egyptians had no right to require from the Hebrews any services but such as agreed with their condition as a free pastoral people; and the customs of the East indicate that the only just and proper condition they could have imposed was that of military service, whenever such service might be required. The condition of the Hebrews in Egypt bore much analogy to that of the Eelauts, or wandering clans, of Persia;† and we have some plain indications that their character was not very dissimilar—being, in fact, that which belongs to all tribes similarly circumstanced. Persia alone now offers "the anomaly of a large portion of the people with nomadic habits, existing separately from the rest, yet residing in the heart of the community, of which they form a constituent part, *and supplying the principal military force of the country*......These various tribes are bold and free as their brethren of the mighty steppes, from whom many of themselves have sprung, warlike, rude, quarrelsome, eager for plunder, despising the pacific drudges that occupy the cultivated tracts and cities in the neighbourhood of their wild haunts—wandering, almost at will, over pathless deserts, like the wild ass in his plains,—idle and profligate, yet hospitable and generous."‡ There is good reason to conclude that the bad, not less than the good, points of this most true portraiture belonged to the Hebrews of this period. We grievously mistake if we regard them as a race of innocent and simple shepherds,

* Exod. v. 12. Some bricks were made by the oppressed Hebrews "with stubble instead of straw."

† See the cut at the head of this chapter.

‡ J. B. Frazer's 'Persia,' 360.

piping and singing beside the streams, or under the shadow of some tree or rock. Not this, but the very reverse, is the character of the Oriental shepherd. And, as Oriental shepherds, it is certain that the character of the Hebrews must have offered much which could not but be, and actually was, highly distasteful to the Egyptians: and it is not by any means unlikely that some acts of theirs—very natural to them, but very disagreeable to the Egyptians—may have brought the anomalous position of the Hebrew people very strongly under the notice of a government not disposed to regard their proceedings with that indulgence which they had previously received.

Upon the whole, the matter seems to have been one which really required the best attention of the government. But this is all: for, unless on the ground of necessity, "the tyrant's plea," the measures which were taken admit of no palliation or excuse. They might have been required to vacate the territory which they occupied, and retire into the desert; or the obligation of military service might have been justly exacted from them, not only in the defence of the frontier on which they were placed, but in any war which the Egyptians undertook. To both these courses it appears that they saw objections; and their objections to the last of them may be conjectured from the fact, that the Eelaut tribes of Persia, without relinquishing their own habits of life, have been able to take the government of the country—for the kings of Persia have, for more than a century past, been chiefs of some of those tribes; and the hereditary aristocracy of the country is formed by the general body of those chiefs. Yet the Eelauts of Persia compose scarcely a fourth of its population. This, therefore, while it shows the objections which the Egyptians might have to employ the pastoral Hebrews in their military operations, may convey an intimation that the apprehensions of the Egyptians, however unfounded, were not so entirely chimerical, or so merely pretended, as some writers imagine.

The course which the Egyptians determined to adopt was to remove the anomalous condition, by compelling them to relinquish their mode of life as tent-dwelling shepherds, and to fix them down as cultivators of the soil, in that land which had originally been granted to them for pasturage. It appears to have been also calculated that the severity of the assimilating operations upon a free and proud people, unaccustomed to labour, and hating the "pacific drudgery" to which they must be reduced, would have much effect in breaking their spirit and in keeping their numbers down. It was in the first place required that they should make bricks, and with them build towns and villages. The principal towns, Pithom and Rameses, were to be strong places, probably intended to be held by Egyptians to enforce the new operations, as well as to furnish secure places to which they might bring, and in which they might treasure up, the proportion of corn and other produce which was to be paid to the king. For this, certain officers were made responsible; and hence it was made imperative on them to enforce the measures by which only the required amounts could be realized. The situation of these "treasure cities for Pharaoh" is not well known; but all accounts agree in giving them a place in the land which the Hebrews occupied. Before, also, the land could be well brought into cultivation, it was necessary to cut canals, to construct dams, and to execute most of the other works which have been already enumerated. Undertakings so hateful as these to a Bedouin people, we know can only be executed by sheer compulsion and under immediate superintendence and control. The Egyptians evidently knew this to be necessary, especially when not only the work but its object was detestable. The execution of the royal orders was therefore confided to men, "task-masters," who were charged with responsibilities which made them exact very strictly the services required. Thus "the Egyptians made the children of Israel serve with rigour: and they made their lives bitter with hard bondage in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field; all the service wherein they made them serve was with rigour."

It is not to be supposed that such a people as the Hebrews, and so numerous as they had now become, submitted very patiently to such measures as these, or that the coercion which was necessary to their execution was unattended with expense and difficulty. Finding this, and observing that the more the Israelites were oppressed the more they multiplied and spread, the king determined to take effectual measures to prevent their increase, and ultimately to

ensure their extinction. To this end orders were given to the midwives to destroy all the male children at the birth, preserving the females—probably with a view to their being ultimately employed in the domestic service, or taken into the harems, of the Egyptians, who on more than one occasion appear to have much admired the comparatively fresh complexion of the Hebrew women. But the midwives paid no attention to the command; and when they were charged with this neglect, they excused themselves by alleging that the superior vigour of the Hebrew women left no occasion for their assistance, and withheld the opportunity of obedience from them.* On this the enraged king hesitated no longer at a more open exhibition of his murderous design, and commanded his people to see that every male Hebrew child which might thereafter be born was thrown into the river. What horror then hung over the house of Israel, to which the abstract love of offspring was an absorbing passion, and all whose future hopes depended upon and were connected with the possession of a numerous issue! Yet now, at this very time, when men in their weak counsels proposed utterly to root up the vine of Israel, which had already spread out its branches so widely and borne such abundant fruit,—now, it pleased God to call into existence the future Deliverer, and to make the very evils to which his infancy was exposed the means of his preparation for that high office which was in a distant day to devolve upon him.

There was one Amram, a son of Kohath and grandson of Levi, who had been blessed with a daughter, Misraim, and a son, Aaron, before this time of deep affliction came. Another son was born soon after the promulgation of the king's murderous edict. Under that edict those parents who would avoid the greater horror of seeing their new-born babes torn from them, and destroyed by the rude hands of the Egyptians, chose rather themselves to commit them to the broad stream tenderly and with tears. But the infant born to Amram proved so very fine a child, that his mother was struck with a more than ordinary reluctance to allow this office to be discharged. It was postponed from day to day for three months, during which his existence was kept carefully concealed. But at the end of that time, finding that it was not possible to hide him longer, and aware that a discovery would bring ruin upon others who were as dear to her, she determined to resign him to the providence of God. She took one of the common baskets made from the papyrus, and strengthened it, and rendered it impervious to the water by coating it on the outside with bitumen and inside with the slime of the Nile. When the babe had been laid in this frail bark, it was placed among the flags which grew upon the river's brink, and the young Miriam, then about nine or ten years old, was left to watch at a distance, to see what might befall her infant brother.

Now, in the good providence of God, it happened that at this time the king's daughter came down with her maidens to bathe in the river. As they walked along its bank the princess perceived the ark, and sent one of her damsels to bring it to her. When she saw the child, its beauty and its tears touched her heart; and, although she knew that it must be one of the Hebrew children whom her father had doomed to destruction, she determined to preserve it. The little girl, who had now drawn nigh, perceiving that she was moved to compassion, ventured to ask, "Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?" And no sooner did she hear the blessed answer, "Go," than she ran to make her anxious mother the happiest of women, by calling her to be the nurse of her own lost child. "Take this child," said the king's daughter to her, "and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages." And only a mother can understand, in all their depth, the feelings of relief and thankfulness with which Jochebed yielded obedience to this command.

When the child needed a nurse no longer—probably when he was about three years of age —he was taken home to the house of the princess by whom he had been saved. The Jewish traditions give to her the name of Thermuthis, and undertake to tell us that she had long

* This was perhaps partly true. At this day the Jewish mothers in Egypt go to the synagogue on the eighth day, when the child is circumcised, to claim the privilege of taking the child in her arms and laying him down on the altar or table of the operator. "In conversing with them," says Dr. Richardson, "on the danger and impropriety of requiring such a service of the mother, they assured me, that it never was attended with any inconvenience, and that it was a practice which mothers would on no account give up."—Travels i. 89.

been married without being blessed with any child.* Therefore, "the good lady did not breed him up as some child of alms, or as some wretched outcast, for whom it might be favour enough to live; but as her own son,—in all the delicacies, in all the learning of Egypt. Whatever the court or school could put into him he wanted not."† She gave him the name of MOSES, from some Egyptian words signifying "taken from the water;" and possibly not without reference to the name Amosis which her father bore.

As the young Hebrew, thus in very infancy honoured and distinguished, does not again come under our notice until forty years of age, we may pass the interval in inquiring into the intermediate state of the Hebrew people.

The murderous edict against the infants of Israel does not seem to have continued long in force; but we are unacquainted with the considerations which led to its repeal. It may be that the people of Lower Egypt generally, were not prepared to go to this extent with the court in its measures against the Hebrews, and that the murmurs of their outraged feelings were heard and respected: or it may be that "Thermuthis" had interest enough with her father to induce him to recall his barbarous edict. But as the birth of Moses appears to have taken place in the latter end of his reign, it seems as well to suppose that the accession of a new king was attended with a change of policy towards the Hebrews, which involved the preservation of their children's lives, and which to this extent may have been influenced by the sister of the new monarch. We conceive, however, that in resolving to spare their lives, it was determined to make those lives a valuable property to the state. Amunoph I., the new sovereign, bears the character of "a great encourager of the arts of peace;"‡ which implies that he much engaged himself in the internal improvement of the country. For the works and undertakings, in which such improvements consist, hands were necessary; and as Egypt does not appear, for a hundred years previously, to have been engaged in any important wars which might have supplied the captive hands usually employed in such undertakings, the destruction of the Hebrew children could not but have seemed to the king a prodigal waste of a power which he much wanted and could well turn to profitable account. From a careful comparison of small circumstances, which it would be tedious to state in detail, it therefore appears to us that at the time, or soon after, the order to destroy the Hebrew children was withdrawn, the attempt to assimilate them, or to fix them down in Goshen as cultivators attached to the soil, was also relaxed, though probably not quite abandoned; but that, instead of this, certain proportions of the people were, in periodical rotation, drafted off for the public service, and dispersed in bodies throughout Lower and Middle Egypt, if not to more distant parts of the kingdom, to labour under the inspection of Egyptian officers. It is useless to inquire very minutely into the particular description of their services, or of the places where they wrought,—to ask whether they erected this fabric, or laboured in that quarry or this mine? —it is enough to know that they were employed "in all manner of service" for which human thews and sinews were required. To render their services more valuable, many of them were, according to Josephus, compelled to learn handicraft employments, that they might exercise them for the benefit of their oppressors. And a confirmation of this, and, indeed, of the view we are generally taking, may be found among the genealogical lists of names with which the Chronicles open: for there we are told of one set of families, of the tribe of Judah, who were engaged in the manufacture of cotton, and of another set, of the same tribe, who were "potters, employed by the king in his own work."§ From the same source we learn that one family of this tribe went and settled in the land of Moab, but in the end returned again to Egypt,‖—an extraordinary circumstance, only to be accounted for by the recollection of the intense desire with which even the Israelites in the wilderness longed for the plenty and comforts of that rich land, and were with difficulty hindered from returning

* This seems probable enough in itself, and more likely than that as an unmarried woman she should propose to adopt this child as her son. Such acts of adoption are, in the East, almost confined to those who are married and have no children. That, if married, we do not hear of her husband, is not in the least a difficulty; for the husband of a princess is, however high his rank, a mere cipher in the East, and she is absolute mistress of him and all that belongs to him.

† Hall, 'Contemplations,' b. i. cont. 2.

‡ Wilkinson's 'Ancient Egyptians,' i. 50.

§ 1 Chron. iv. 21, 23.

‖ 1 Chron. iv. 22.

thither. It is more than probable that many of the Hebrews were also employed in cultivating the crown lands; for it is certain they were employed in agriculture, and the Law assumes them to be well acquainted with agricultural operations. And now, while we justly reprobate the unprincipled system under which a free people were thus, by severe compulsion, reduced to servile labour, we must not be unmindful that it was a part of the Divine plan concerning them, that they should be broken from their nomade habits and established in a settled community. A large proportion of the laws in the Mosaical code are expressly adapted to this end. And the case being such, it is obvious that their harsh Egyptian training in agriculture and the arts of settled life, must have tended very greatly to facilitate that transition,—a transition so rare and so exceedingly difficult, that perhaps nothing less than the strong compulsion now imposed, could have brought them into an adequate state of preparation for it. Thus was every step in the history of this remarkable people—even their afflictions and bondage—made instrumental in working out their special destinies.

As we have already intimated, by the use of the words "periodical rotation," we do not suppose that the same men of the Hebrews were kept constantly employed in the public service. All probability and analogy would rather lead us to conclude that the whole of the Hebrew population, excepting the women, the chief persons in each tribe, the old people, and those who were too young for labour—which exceptions probably will in most cases amount to about three-fourths of the whole of any population,—were divided into gangs, which served in rotation; the individuals of each gang being allowed to return to their families in Goshen when their period of service had expired, and to attend to their own affairs until their turn came round to take the place of another relieved gang. It will be seen how well this explanation agrees with and illustrates the position which they seemed to occupy in Egypt when the time of their deliverance approached.

Amunoph I. was, according to both Manetho and the sculptures, succeeded by his sister, Amense; but as her husband seems, in her right, to have wielded the regal powers, under the name of Thothmes I., she is passed over by some of the old copyists of Manetho, and in the sculptures her reign is included in his. Now, as the patroness of Moses was the daughter of Amosis and sister to his successor Amunoph, we shall scarcely be thought too bold in hazarding the conjecture that *she* was the very princess who, with her husband, succeeded Amunoph. We have already stated the tradition and the probability that she was married but had no son; and, as a confirming circumstance of identity, it may be mentioned that this Amense and Thothmes I. were themselves succeeded in like manner as they had succeeded Amunoph,—that is, a queen occurs, named Amun-neit-gori, whose reign is included in that of a king, Thothmes II., who appears to have been her husband, suggesting that Amense and Thothmes I. left no son, but were succeeded by a daughter jointly with her husband. Further, the fortieth year of Moses, when he comes again under our notice, coincides exactly with the accession of Amense and Thothmes I.; and this coincidence is not only corroboratory of our conjecture, but helps to throw light upon the circumstances which we have now to consider.

Moses was brought up as the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter, and as such was instructed in all that "wisdom" of the Egyptians which was the admiration and a proverb of all surrounding nations. The value of the education which he received need not be lightly estimated. For let it be recollected that then, and long after, Egypt infinitely surpassed all other nations in moral and physical science, in knowledge and in art; and let it be borne in mind that—"If a philosopher sought knowledge, Egypt was the school,—if a prince required a physician, it was to Egypt he applied,—if any material point perplexed the decision of kings or councils, to Egypt it was referred."* It may, therefore, be reasonably inferred that the information which Moses acquired, and the powers of mind which were in him awakened and cultivated by the education he received, went to prepare him, in no unimportant degree, for the high duties which ultimately devolved upon him; and to this education may safely be attributed much of that superiority of personal and mental character over the men with whom he had to deal,

* 'Egypt and Thebes,' xii.

which Moses never fails to exhibit. It may safely be said that no man among the Hebrews was, or could be, so well fitted as he was for the arduous task of forming into a nation a body so disorganized and so depressed in mind and character by long servitude.

As Moses grew up he was well acquainted with the remarkable history of his own birth and preservation, and with the history of his people. He could not be ignorant of the future prospects of the race to which he belonged; and he must have known that their bondage in Egypt was limited to a certain number of years, the term of which might seem to be at no great distance. The objects and views of the Egyptians in their oppression of the Israelites could not but be intimately known to him; and Stephen, speaking on the authority of old traditions,* seems to intimate that the high hope of becoming their deliverer was not a stranger to his heart. Indeed, what we see so clearly, could not be entirely hidden from himself,—that, if they were to be delivered, there was no man who, from his peculiar position and attainments, seemed so obviously designed and prepared by Providence to act in their behalf. He was forty years of age, when circumstances compelled him to take his course as a Hebrew or as an Egyptian. If, as we have suggested, his Egyptian benefactress had just then with her husband ascended the throne, it may easily be supposed that this event could not but have some effect on his position. They possibly felt that they could no longer, in their public station, and with a view to the condition of the Israelites in that country, continue to him their conspicuous favour and support *as a Hebrew;* and may, therefore, have required that he should submit to a formal act of naturalization and adoption to constitute him legally *an Egyptian.* To this there were, in his place, the highest temptations of honour and grandeur which could well be offered. But Moses heeded them not. He took his part with the despised and afflicted bondsmen. He " refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season."†



[Moses and the Egyptian.]

* Acts vii. 23—25.

† Hebrews xi. 24, 25.

After this refusal, the court was no longer a place for him. And it then entered his mind to go among the Hebrews;* seemingly, that he might make himself personally acquainted with their condition, and observe whether there was spirit enough left in them to hail the hope of deliverance, and make an effort to realize it. Grievous were the sights he saw. The degradation of the blessed seed of Abraham, his brethren, filled his patriotic heart with grief; while the oppressive conduct of paltry officials, who were set over their burdens, roused him to indignation. These feelings moved him, in one instance, to a deed which determined his future course. Going forth one day, he saw a Hebrew atrociously maltreated by an Egyptian officer, and, kindling at the sight, he interposed, and delivered the Israelite, by slaying his oppressor. Knowing the consequences of a discovery, he hid the body in the sand; and since no Egyptian had witnessed the deed, he concluded that the secret was safe, and that no danger need be apprehended. Hebrews had seen it, but they could not betray him;—nay, rather, it seemed likely that so decisive and bold an act, which put him entirely in their power, and evinced his hatred of their oppression, would suffice to manifest to them that, although hitherto brought up with, and living among the great ones of Egypt, he was now ready to take his stand, decisively, with them, and for them. It was, if they so pleased to regard it, the first and kindling act of a revolt against their tyrants, and which, when they understood that he had laid aside his greatness in Egypt for their sakes, was likely, had they but spirit, to draw their attention to him as the man by whose hand God might deliver Israel.† But they had no spirit: they understood him not. Oppression had already done its work; and of nothing were they so much afraid as of any circumstance which might involve the displeasure of their masters: and so that they "did eat meat to the full," blows were easy to bear, during their times of service, and labour light. There was also a want among them of that sympathy of the part for the whole, which is another natural consequence of an enslaved condition. The individuals who were, from time to time, maltreated, groaned, indeed: their bodies groaned, but not their souls. And the others who beheld it, were only glad it was not their case; and when, in turn, it became their case, endured it, looking forward to their time of holiday in Goshen. Moses himself was, perhaps, the only man of their race who felt an enlarged sympathy for the general body of the Hebrew people. This representation of their case and character is fairly deduced from the various facts, occurring at different times, which bear upon it; and the statement of it now will enable their occasional acts and sentiments, both in Egypt and afterwards in the desert, to be better understood.

Moses had soon occasion to see something of this. The day after that in which he had slain the Egyptian, he walked forth again, and observing two of the Hebrews striving together, he kindly and gently interposed to reconcile them, saying, "Sirs, ye are brethren: why do ye wrong one to another?" On which the one who was the most in the wrong thrust him away, sharply answering, "Who made *thee* a ruler and a judge over *us?* Wilt thou kill me, as thou didst kill the Egyptian yesterday?" This was enough to satisfy Moses of their general state of feeling, while it assured him that the manifestation of his own disposition to act for them against the Egyptians, and between them to produce union among themselves, was received with dislike and apprehension, rather than with gratitude and confidence. It is, moreover, likely that this disclosure had taken place in the presence of some Egyptians; and, on all accounts, it was full time for him to look to his own safety. Moses was now, probably, under the displeasure of the court; and if he were still in some favour, he knew that the sovereign could not, with any show of decency, interfere to save a Hebrew from the consequences of slaying an Egyptian—and that, too, under circumstances which offered to the Hebrews an example of insubordination, and was calculated to rouse them to revolt. To understand the full extent of his danger, it should be recollected that the Egyptian laws against those who deprived a man of life were inexorably severe. To slay even a foreign slave was a crime punished with death.‡ How much rather, then, when a freeman was slaughtered; and how much more, still, when an Egyptian was slain by one

* Acts vii. 23.

† Acts vii. 25.

‡ Compare this with the absolute power of the ancient Greeks and Romans, and the modern Orientals over the lives of their slaves. Hence Potiphar dared not touch the life of Joseph, under circumstances of aggravated offence, as seemed, which would have led any but an Egyptian master to have slain him on the spot.

of a foreign race. So far, indeed, were their ideas in this matter carried, that, to be an accidental witness of an attempt to murder, without endeavouring to prevent it, was a capital offence, which could only be palliated by bringing proofs of inability to act.* Aware, therefore, of the effects of such a disclosure as that which had been made, flight was the only alternative now open to him who had refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He fled. It was well that he fled so soon: for the death of the Egyptian by his hand having transpired, it soon reached the ears of the king, and was probably related to him with every circumstance of aggravation by the jealous courtiers, who may be supposed to have been glad of this opportunity of completing his ruin. The effect was that the king resolved not to screen him from punishment, but gave orders for his apprehension.

But Moses was already beyond the reach of pursuit. He journeyed eastward upwards of two hundred and fifty miles, and only began to deem himself safe when the deserts of Arabia Petræa and both the arms of the Red Sea were between him and the Nile. In the country of Midian, on the remote border of the eastern gulf, the travel-worn and thirsty fugitive sat down, one day, beside a well of water, for refreshment and for rest. Here he met with an adventure very similar to that of Jacob in Padan-Aram. Water was scarce in that region, and the well by which Moses sat seems to have been the common property of the people in that neighbourhood. While he was there, the daughters of Jethro, the sheikh of a Midianite clan, came to give water to their father's flocks. They were busy in drawing water and discharging it into the troughs for the cattle to drink, when the shepherds of other flocks came also to the well, and rudely thrust away the women to serve their own cattle first. Moses, as might be expected from him, flew to their relief, and not only drove back the churlish shepherds, but watered the flocks of the damsels for them. This led to his introduction to the hospitalities of the family to which they belonged; and, in the end, he consented to remain with them, and undertake the charge of the flocks, which he could lead far off, to greener pastures and more abundant waters than could be supplied by the immediate neighbourhood to which the female shepherds were confined. Moses could not be long among them without manifesting the superiority of his character and knowledge; and so much were the family to which he was now attached pleased with him, that Zipporah, one of the daughters, was given to him in marriage; and by her he had, in the course of time, two sons, the eldest of whom he called Gershom,† and the younger Eliezer.‡

Here he remained forty years, forgotten, probably, by both Hebrews and Egyptians, or remembered only as a tradition; and himself but little heedful now of what he had been, or of the high designs which had passed through his mind; and brought up, as he had been, amidst the throng of cities and the pomp of courts, we may easily believe that the solitary deserts and unfrequented vales, to which he now was wont to lead his flocks, had charms for him, by contrast, which he would not willingly have relinquished to return to the scenes and circumstances of his earlier life. That splendid dream offered many points for that meditation for which he had ample leisure: and the various knowledge which his education had supplied gave him ample materials for thought. With the history of his fathers, the patriarchs, whose manner of life was like his own, he was well acquainted; and when his mind turned to the condition of their offspring in Egypt, he could not but feel that the day of their deliverance approached, and looked forth to see from what quarter it might come. But, personally, he had nothing to do with it. They had rejected and betrayed him; and he knew them to be incapable of any exertion to free themselves. Doubtless, God would free them; but after what manner and with what instruments God might work, he knew not. Besides, forty years had made some change in his character, as it does make in the character of all men. "During his long exile, Moses was trained in the school of adversity for that arduous mission which he had prematurely anticipated; and, instead of that flaming zeal which at first actuated him, he at length became '*very meek* above all the men that were upon the face

* Diodorus Siculus, i. 6.

† Gershom means, "*a stranger here;* because," said Moses, "I am a stranger in a foreign land."

‡ This name means, *God my help;* "because," he said, "the God of my father hath helped me, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh."

of the earth.' (Num. xii. 3.) And no man, indeed, had greater trials or more occasion for meekness, and his *humility* was equal thereto. His backwardness afterwards to undertake that mission to which he was destined from the womb, was no less remarkable than his forwardness before."*

We will now note what happened during these forty years in Egypt.

The prince, Thothmes I., at the beginning of whose reign Moses fled from Egypt, reigned twenty-seven years. "Some buildings of his time still exist; but the second of that name has left little to mark the history of his reign. Between these two monarchs appears to have intervened a queen (whom Mr. Wilkinson calls), Amun-neit-gori, and who has hitherto given rise to more doubts and questions than any other sovereign of this dynasty. But whether she was only regent during the reign of Thothmes II. and III., or succeeded to the throne in right of Thothmes I.,† in whose honour she erected several monuments, is still uncertain, and some have doubted her being a queen. The name has been generally erased, and those of the second and third Thothmes are placed over it; but sufficient remains to prove that the small temple of Medeenet Haboo, the elegant edifice under the Qoorneh rocks, and the great obelisks of Karnak, with many other handsome monuments, were erected by her orders, and the attention paid to the military caste is testified by the subjects of the sculptures."‡

Leaving this princess, and the question how and in what character she operated in the reigns of Thothmes II. and III., we may proceed to state that the reign of the first of these princes lasted ten years, and that, consequently, the fortieth year from the flight of Moses fell in the reign of his successor, Thothmes III., who is, therefore, to be regarded as the Pharaoh so celebrated in the history of Israel's deliverance. That deliverance is placed by Mr. Wilkinson in the fourth year of his reign. Until towards the end of these forty years, the condition of the Hebrews seems to have remained much as it had been before Moses left. That it had not grown worse, and was such as we have represented it, appears to be shown from the fact that the Ephraimites were in a condition to undertake that expedition against the Philistines which proved so disastrous for them, and to which we have already alluded.§ But Thothmes III. appears from the sculptures to have been an enterprising prince both in the arts of war and peace. He was a great improver and builder;—a character which could not but operate unfavourably for the Hebrews by creating a great demand for labour. It may seem, indeed, to have been a sort of rule that the best kings for the Egyptians were the worst for the Hebrews. Heavier exactions upon their services appear to have been made: the tasks required from them were more onerous; and the alternating periods of rest allowed to the several gangs of workmen were probably abridged, if they did not entirely cease. Never was their bondage so bitter—their affliction so heavy as now. Their lot became too hard even for their tried patience to bear any longer. But none of their chiefs seemed disposed to risk the consequences of moving for the deliverance of Israel; and in themselves they found no help. What then could they do? They bethought them of crying to God,—to the God whose promises to their fathers offered a large inheritance of hope. They did cry: and God heard them.

At this time Moses had led his flocks round the eastern arm of the Red Sea into the peninsula of Sinai, and penetrated to the green and wall-watered valleys which are involved among the mountains of its central region. He was near the mountain of Horeb, when he beheld before him a thorn-bush on fire, a circumstance not in itself unusual in that region; but the wonder was that the bush continued to burn without being consumed, and without any subsidence of the flame. Moses advanced to view this strange sight more closely; but, as he drew nigh, he heard a voice, from the midst of the burning bush, calling him by his name. Astonished, he answered, "Here am I." Then the voice cried, "Approach not hither. Pull

* Hales, ii. 184.

† We have ourselves already hazarded it as the most probable conjecture, that she was the daughter of Thothmes I. and Amense, and that, as in the previous case, her husband ascended the throne with her under the name of Thothmes II; the succeeding monarch, Thothmes III., would then appear to have been their son,—which fact would account for the appearance of her name in his reign also. We can see no explanation which seems so fully to agree with circumstances as this.

‡ 'Ancient Egyptians,' i. 52.

§ Page 146.



[Chapel of the Burning Bush.*]

thy sandals from thy feet: for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." The baring of the feet, thus required, was a mark of respect, common to all Oriental nations. The voice then said, "I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Then Moses hid his face in his robe; for he was afraid to look at God: and thus, barefooted and with veiled face, he stood to receive the Divine commands. The voice now said, "I have surely beheld the affliction of my people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry on account of their task-masters; and am come down to deliver them from the hand of the Egyptians; and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land—a land flowing with milk and honey. Lo, as now the cry of the sons of Israel hath come unto me, and I have also seen the oppressions with which the Egyptians oppress them: come, now, therefore, and I will send thee to Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring my people, the sons of Israel, from the land of Egypt."

Moses heard this announcement, as regarded himself, with surprised and unwilling ears. "Who am *I*," said he, "that *I* should go to Pharaoh, and that *I* should bring the sons of Israel from

* Pococke speaks of a bush planted in the garden by the monks, which they affirm to be the real one in which God appeared. "There is no sign of this at present," says Mr. Arundale, who has furnished the drawing for the present engraving. This is true; and Pococke must have misunderstood the monks, who certainly never pointed out any such bush to the older travellers any more than they do now. They have always described this chapel as covering the site of the burning bush. It seems to be now in the same state as when seen by Morison; and from his account it appears to have been built by the Empress Helena over the spot which tradition indicated as that on which the burning bush had stood, and, consequently, preceded the erection of the convent itself and the great church by Justinian. It adjoins the church, and is counted the most holy spot in Sinai. The walls are covered with mosaics and old Greek paintings, and from the ceiling are suspended thirty silver lamps (presented to the chapel by different persons at different times), which are all alight during the celebration of Divine service, which, in this chapel, is every Sunday and on the feast days of the Virgin. The precise spot which the bush is supposed to have occupied is marked by an oblong slab of white marble, over which is an altar sustained by four small columns, also of white marble. From under the table of this altar are suspended three small lamps of silver which are kept always burning.

That this marks the site of the burning bush is doubtful enough; but a degree of curiosity and interest still attaches to the structures and memorials by which, amidst these solitudes, men have sought to commemorate the remarkable events which occurred in them.

the land of Egypt?" He bowed to the sufficiency of the answer—"*I* will be with thee;" but still was most reluctant to undertake an enterprise, the difficulties of which were well known to him. Great as the difficulty was of dealing with the Egyptians in such a case, *that*, to a man of his knowledge, appeared so much less arduous than the task of securing the confidence and support of the Israelites themselves—slaves in heart, as he knew them to be—and of making them true to their own cause, that the other was quite lost and forgotten in it. Even after he had been told how he was to proceed;—that he was, on his arrival in Egypt, to assemble the elders of Israel, and announce his mission to them, with the assurance that they would believe him,—his mind still dwelt on this most serious point. "Behold," he said, "they may not believe me, or hearken unto my voice; for they may say, Jehovah hath *not* appeared unto thee." Then, to give him the confidence he so much wanted, as well as to enable him to vouch to the Israelites his divine commission, the Lord empowered him to work three signal wonders,—the first, of turning his rod into a serpent, and of restoring it again; the second, of making his hand leprous as snow, when he first drew it forth from his bosom, and of restoring it again, when he next drew it out; and the third, of turning water taken from the river Nile into blood.

He was also instructed how he was to act with the Egyptians; but, as his proceedings were in strict conformity with those instructions, they will presently come before us in another shape. But Moses was now eighty years of age;—and, although this was probably not more than equivalent to the age of sixty years in our own days, the fire of his youth had subsided; and, accustomed as he had been for forty years to a quiet and solitary life, he felt sincerely reluctant to embark anew in scenes of trouble and difficulty, by undertaking the high but arduous emprise now imposed upon him. The self-confidence of his earlier life had also passed away; and he was deeply sensible of his own inadequacy to meet the requirements of such a task. This he ventured to intimate, dwelling particularly on the fact that he was not an eloquent man, and that his slow and impeded utterance would divest all his statements of any weight which they might otherwise claim. Even the answer, "I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say," did not satisfy one who so anxiously desired to be excused; and, without making any more objections, which he found so well answered, he distinctly begged that the Lord would be pleased to transfer his choice to some one more competent than himself for such high service. But the divine purpose was not thus to be moved. He was told that his brother Aaron, who possessed all that eloquence which he deemed so necessary, would come forth to meet him as he approached Egypt, and would be most glad to see him once more; *he* could act as the spokesman of his brother, who, through him, could deliver, with all due solemnity, the messages with which he might be charged.

Moses no longer withstood the divine appointment. His hesitation and resistance had been that of a man who was but too well aware of the heavy duties of the high office to which he was called, and who knew that they must be discharged, and was determined to discharge them. So, henceforth, we hear no more of doubt or difficulty. The youth of his mind was renewed; and, from that day to the last of his protracted life, all its powerful energies were devoted to the deliverance and welfare of Israel.

Now Moses departed from "the mount of God," and returned to Jethro. He made him not acquainted with his high mission, but requested,—"Let me go, I pray thee, to my brethren in Egypt, and see if they be yet alive." Jethro answered, "Go in peace." But before Moses went, it pleased God to relieve him from any apprehensions of personal danger from the cause which had occasioned his flight from Egypt, by conveying to him the assurance that all those were dead who had sought his life.

CHAPTER III.

THE DELIVERANCE.



[View on the River Nile.]

Charged with the highest and most arduous mission ever confided to a mortal, Moses departed from the shores of the Red Sea to return to the banks of the Nile. His wife and two sons were with him, riding upon asses.(1) But at the caravanserai, on the way, Moses was threatened with death because he had left his youngest son uncircumcised; and Zipporah, understanding this, and perceiving that her husband was so smitten as to be unable himself to execute the act of obedience, took a sharp flint, and herself performed the operation. She was, however, so much annoyed by this occurrence, that she returned with her two sons to her father.*

As the future Deliverer advanced towards Egypt, Aaron received the divine command to go forth and meet his brother in the wilderness. They met, and embraced each other; after which Moses made Aaron acquainted with all that had happened to him, and the commission which he had received. They then proceeded together to the land of Goshen.

It appears that the patriarchal government still subsisted among the Hebrews, not having

* That she went, in the first instance, with Moses and afterwards returned to her father appears from a comparison of Exod. iv. 20, and xviii. 2. Howell ingeniously conjectures that the occurrence took place, not on the journey to Egypt, but on the journey from Horeb to Midian; and that Moses left his wife and sons there with Jethro before departing for Egypt. But we fear the text will not allow this somewhat desirable explanation.

been interfered with, or, certainly, not destroyed by the Egyptians. Under this form of government, the chief authority—such as a father exercises over his grown children—was vested in the heads of tribes, and, subordinately, in the heads of clans, or collections of families. As these were generally men well advanced in years, they are called collectively "elders" in the Scriptural history. On arriving in Egypt these elders were assembled, and the eloquent Aaron declared to them what he had heard from his brother, and the errand on which he was now come. They concluded by displaying the marvels which Moses had been authorized to work. The people, who, as we have seen, had already been brought to look to the Lord for their deliverance, recognised in this the answer to their supplications. "They believed: and when they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, they bowed their heads and worshipped."

Moses and Aaron then proceeded to follow, to the letter, the instructions which had been given in the mount.

They went to the court of Pharaoh, and were probably attended by the more influential of the elders, although we only read that the two brothers entered the presence. It also appears that the mission produced so much excitement among the Hebrews, that many of those engaged in labour left their work to watch the result.

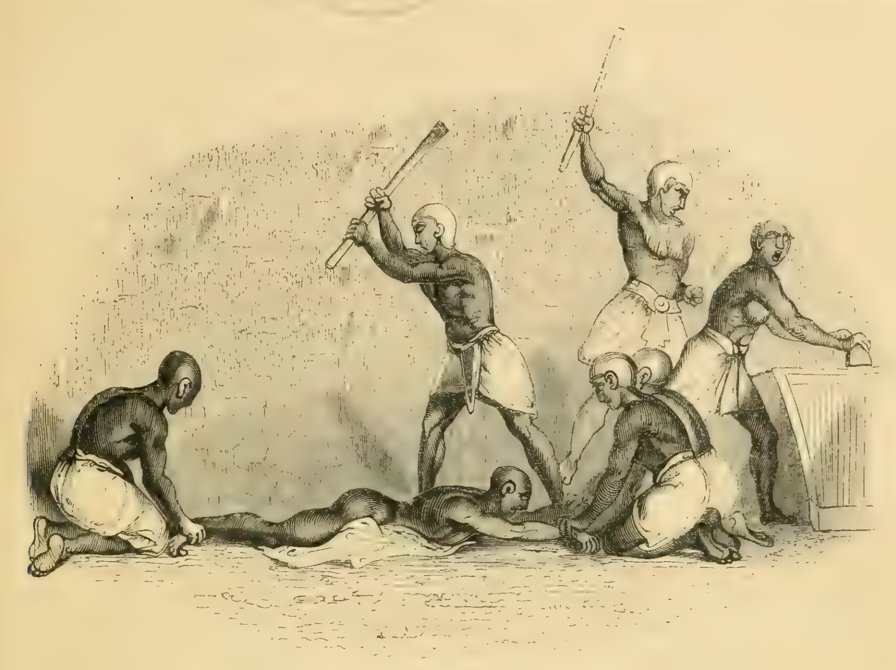
On appearing before the king, Aaron announced that Jehovah, the God of the Hebrews, had appeared to them, and had sent them to require the king to allow the Israelites to go into the wilderness, to hold a feast to Him there. Pharaoh was doubtless astonished to receive this demand. He replied, "Who is Jehovah, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not Jehovah, neither will I let Israel go." But the brothers still insisted on their demand, explaining, more particularly, that they wished the people to go three days' journey into the wilderness, there to offer sacrifices to their God; and intimated that the Israelites might expect to be visited by "the pestilence and the sword," unless they were obedient, which, reflectively, hinted to the king himself that he might expect to be punished if he prevented their obedience. To this the king deigned no answer, but dismissed them with a severe reprimand for putting such wild notions into the heads of the people, and calling away their attention from their work, to which they were all commanded to return.

That same day, the king, affecting to attribute this application to the too idle life which the Hebrews were allowed to lead, determined to bring down the rising spirit by making their burdens heavier upon them. "Let there be more work laid upon the men," he said, "that they may labour therein; and let them not regard vain words."

Hitherto, those who laboured in the brick-fields had been furnished all the materials for their work, not only the clay with which the bricks were formed, but the straw with which they were compacted; but now it was ordered that they should no longer be furnished with straw, but should collect it for themselves, while the same number of bricks should be exacted which they had formerly been required to supply. This was a grievous alteration; seeing that much of the time which should have been employed in making the bricks was now consumed in seeking for straw. And this burden must have become more heavy every day, in proportion as the straw thus hunted up became scarce in the neighbourhood of the brick-fields. It became at last necessary to employ stubble instead of straw. This was a common enough resource when straw could not be easily procured; and old sun-dried bricks, compacted with stubble instead of straw, are at this day found not only in Egypt but in Babylonia. Under all these circumstances the work could not be done—the required tale of bricks could not be given in to the taskmasters.

It appears that under the Egyptian taskmasters there were Hebrew "officers" in charge of each gang of labourers, and who were personally accountable for the work which the gang had to perform—the taskmasters themselves being responsible to the government for the work of larger bodies of Hebrew bondsmen. Yet the Hebrew officers had access to Pharaoh as well as the Egyptian taskmasters, and when he issued any orders respecting the "burdens" of the Israelites, it was his custom to send for both. Nevertheless, the taskmasters finding the required number of bricks was not produced, ordered the Hebrew officers to be beaten,

asking the while, "Wherefore have ye not fulfilled your task in making brick, both yesterday and to-day, as heretofore?" The ancient sculptures and paintings seem to convey the intimation that Egypt was as much governed by the stick, in ancient times, as Persia or China is now, and the manner of its application appears also to have been similar. That the Hebrew overseers should be beaten, was quite natural under such circumstances. They knew that the



[Egyptian Bastinado.]

Egyptian taskmasters could afford them no relief, if they had been so minded; and they therefore repaired in a body to the king himself, to make their troubles known. They complained of the impossible tasks now imposed; and of being beaten for deficiencies which they could not possibly prevent. But the king was inexorable; and, as we imagine, with a design to turn the Hebrew people from their new objects, and to alienate their minds from Moses, he took heed to remind them of the cause of their increased burdens, saying, "Ye are idle, ye are idle: *therefore* ye say, Let us go and do sacrifice to Jehovah." If his object were such, he succeeded very completely. As they left the king, they met Moses and Aaron; and began charging them as those who were the authors of all the calamities they suffered. Moses did not deem it advisable to make any answer *to them;* but *to God* he represented, with great sorrow, how much otherwise than improved the condition of Israel had been made by the steps which had been taken. In reply, the Lord renewed his promises of protection and deliverance in the strongest and most encouraging terms; and intimated that, since they now saw the inadequacy of merely human means, or of their own resources, to effect this great deliverance, and that the Egyptians would only through compulsion let them go; they should now see with how "a stretched-out arm," and with what "great judgments," He would bring them forth from under the burdens of their oppressors.

Moses repeated all this to the Hebrews. But, "from anguish of spirit and from cruel bondage," they heeded him not. In the first instance they had been willing enough to be delivered—they had sighed for deliverance—but then it must be deliverance by miracle, not through any exertion or any suffering of theirs. They were poor spiritless slaves, as Moses had found them forty years before; and now their chief concern was about having offended the Egyptians, and made their own position worse, through having given their sanction to the

proceedings of Moses. And so depressed were they in character and heart, that they shrunk from the degree of exertion and enterprise which must necessarily attend so great an operation, and began to think that their present condition—even the condition of bondage, but with safety and with sufficient food—might be better than that which was offered to them. They said, "Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians; for it is better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness." *

This confirmed the fears which the previous experience of Moses had led him to entertain; and the result was so discouraging to him, that when directed to appear again before the king, and to renew the demand which had been followed by such disastrous consequences, he ventured to propose the very natural objection that since even his own people would not attend to him, how could he expect that the king of Egypt would hearken to him,—the rather since he was destitute of the advantages of an eloquent or ready utterance? He went, however, after having been reminded that his brother Aaron, who possessed these qualities in a very eminent degree, had been given to him for a spokesman. At this second interview, the king, as had been foretold, demanded of them whether they could not show some sign or wonder—some miracle—in proof of their commission. On which Aaron threw down his staff upon the ground, where it became a serpent before them all. This gave occasion to perhaps the most extraordinary contest on record. The strange God of the Hebrews required Pharaoh to let the Israelites depart; while the priests of his own gods—who doubtless had their share of profitable interest in the labours of the bondsmen—insisted that this could not be allowed, especially as the assigned reason for the journey was to perform a service for which they would have been stoned if it were performed in Egypt. Under these circumstances, the king concluded that unless this strange God, of whom Moses and Aaron spoke, and from whom they professed to derive miraculous powers, were able to give them the power of working greater marvels than could be effected by his own priests and magicians, who professed to derive their powers from the gods of Egpyt, he should be justified in paying no attention to a demand, just in itself, but suspicious and dangerous as viewed through the policy which the Egyptian government had followed. This contest was not provoked or sought by Moses and Aaron: it resulted from, or rather was imposed upon, their acts by the king; for whenever a wonder was wrought, Pharaoh set his "wise men" to do the like. If, by illusion, they succeeded in producing the same appearance, the king was satisfied—his heart was hardened in the course he was pursuing: but if they failed, then his heart was hardened still. Or it may be that the magicians of Egypt, who wrought such seeming wonders "by their enchantments," did so by the profession of superior and deep arts, rather than by the pretension to immediate empowerment from the gods: and if so, the neutralizing effect on the miracles wrought by Moses would be equal or greater, inasmuch as it might then be pretended that his wonders, like theirs, were wrought through his being "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians." Perhaps it was partly to preclude such a notion that most of the wonders were wrought, not by the hand of Moses himself, but by his brother Aaron, who had not, like him, received an Egyptian education.

These things having occurred to the king, he sent for "the wise men and sorcerers of Egypt." They, by their arts, performed the same marvel, or, at least, appeared to do so. They threw down their staves, of which every one became a serpent. It is not necessary to suppose that any supernatural influence was exerted, or that any real transformation took place. We may mention generally, that by their transcendent art and their superior acquaintance with the properties of matter, the Egyptian priesthood excelled all the ancients in the production of those effects and illusions which were inseparably and essentially connected with every system of Pagan worship; and by which the well-instructed priests were enabled to beguile and hold in bondage the minds and senses of the ignorant multitudes. While this may account generally for the surprising imitations by the Egyptian "wise men" (who were, unquestionably, members of the priesthood), of the miracles wrought by the hands of Moses and Aaron; their present feat seems particularly easy of explanation

* This answer is preserved in the Samaritan, but not in our present Hebrew Bibles and the translations from it. That it was given, however, appears from a retrospective reference to it in Exod. xiv. 12.

when we recollect that ancient Egypt was, as modern Egypt now is, very famous for its serpent-charmers. These personages can and do perform operations with and upon serpents, which still seem prodigious to the uninstructed and almost to instructed minds. At their command their well-trained serpents will seem to sleep, or to become torpid and lie as if dead: they will come at the call of the "charmer," who without fear will keep them hid in the folds of his garment, or allow them to twine around his neck. They are also skilful jugglers, and able with great address to substitute one object for another.* Such men might, without much difficulty, do that which the "wise men" of Pharaoh did; but by which of their many tricks it was effected it is not needful to inquire. They might have brought live serpents, and adroitly substituted them for their staves. And although Aaron's serpent swallowed up the other serpents, showing the superiority of the true miracle over the false, it might, as Dr. Hales remarks,† only lead the king to conclude that Moses and Aaron were more expert jugglers than Jannes and Jambres, who, as St. Paul informs us ‡ from Jewish traditions, were the chief of their opponents. This miracle was therefore abortive, with regard to its effect upon the king; and, as the same excellent writer observes, "his incredulity only resembled the incredulity of the Israelites themselves, when the same miracle was wrought before them; and it was not considered as decisive even by the Lord, when he supposed they might not be convinced until the third miraculous sign, as was actually the case.§ In both cases, therefore, the reality of the transformation might be doubted by Pharaoh as well as by the Israelites, on the supposition that it might have been the effect of legerdemain."

After this commenced the famous PLAGUES, growing more awful and tremendous in their progress, whereby God designed to make Pharaoh *know* that which he confessedly knew not —that the God of the Hebrews was the Supreme Lord; to give evidence to the world of his power and justice; and so to exercise judgment upon the Egyptians for their oppression of Israel, that the very gods they feared and the elements they worshipped were made the instruments of distress and ruin to them.

As it is of some importance to understand the *time* of the year in which these plagues occurred, it may be well to adduce the following statement on the subject from Dr. Hales. It is the most satisfactory we have met with.

"The season of the year, and the commencement of the plagues, is nowhere specified, but both may be collected from the history. The exode of the Israelites, after the tenth and last plague, was about the vernal equinox, or the beginning of April, on the fifteenth day of the first month, Abib (Exod. xii. 6); but by the seventh plague of hail, the *barley* was smitten; but not the *wheat* and *rye* of later growth. For, according to the report of modern travellers, Heyman and Hasselquist, the barley harvest in Egypt is reaped in March, and the wheat in April; and Le Brun found the whole to be over at Cairo upon the nineteenth of April. This agrees with the account of Moses, that 'the barley was in the ear,' though not yet fit for reaping; but 'the wheat and the rye were not grown up.'‖ This judgment, therefore, must have happened about a month before the exode, or in the beginning of March, before the barley harvest, so early as to leave room for the three succeeding plagues; and if we count backward two months, by the same analogy, for the six first plagues, it will bring the first about the beginning of January, or commencement of the winter season; at which time the river was lowest, and its waters clearest."¶

The river Nile was one of the chief gods of the Egyptians, and as such was honoured with feasts, and sacrifices, (2) and rites of ceremonial worship. The king went forth one morning to its banks, perhaps to render some act of homage; and was there met by Moses and Aaron, who, after repeating their demand, and being again refused, announced, in the name of JEHOVAH, the act they intended to perform—and the object—"In this thou shalt know that I am JEHOVAH." Then, in the presence of the king and his servants, the prophet lifted up his wondrous rod, and therewith smote the river; and at once its holy and most wholesome

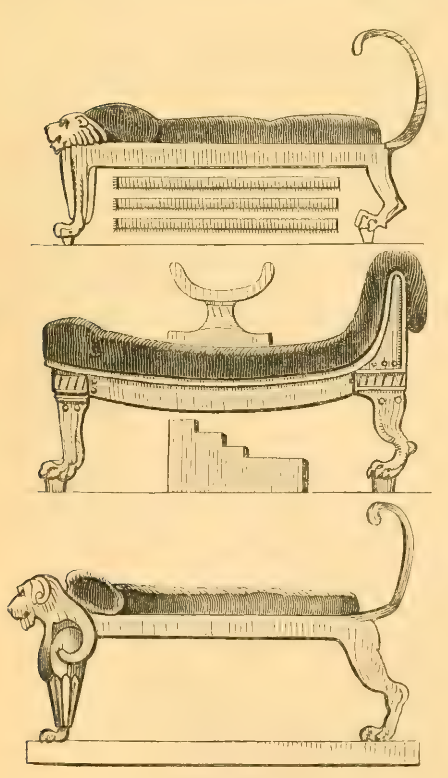
* M. du Bois-Aymé, Notice sur le Séjour des Hébreux en Egypte, in 'Descript. de l'Egypte,' viii. 108. Salgues, 'Des Erreurs et des Préjugés répandus dans la Société,' ii. 255.

† 'Analysis,' ii. 167. ‡ 2 Tim. iii. 8. § See Exod. iv. 8, 9, compared with iv. 30, 31.

‖ Exod. ix. 31, 32. ¶ 'Analysis,' ii. 167, 168.

waters were changed into blood, than which nothing could be more abhorrent to the Egyptians, as we have already intimated.* All the waters of Egypt were derived from the Nile, and upon all these waters the change operated. Not only were all the numerous canals and reservoirs which were fed by the Nile, filled with this bloody water, but *even that which had been preserved in vessels of wood and stone for domestic use.* This last circumstance is particularly mentioned in the sacred narrative, as if purposely to evince the miraculous nature of the transaction; and has therefore been carefully overlooked by those who have sought to explain this and the other plagues by the operation of natural and (in Egypt) ordinary causes. This calamity continued for seven days, during which all the fish that were in the river died in the corrupted and nauseous waters. Many of these fish were worshipped by the Egyptians; and fish, generally, formed a large and principal article of diet to them. This was, therefore, a great and complicated calamity while it lasted. The Egyptians loathing now to drink that water which they prized beyond all things, and held to be more pleasant and salutary than any other which the earth could offer, began to dig the ground in the hope of finding pure water. They did find it; and this gave the priests an opportunity of imitating the miracle on a small scale. Nothing could be more easy than by chemical means to give a blood-like appearance to the water of some of the wells thus formed, or to water taken from them. But this was enough to satisfy the easy conscience of Pharaoh; and we are told that "even this he did not lay to heart."

When, therefore, according to their instructions, Moses and Aaron again bore to Pharaoh the message, "Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go that they may serve me," they were again refused. On which Aaron, under the direction of Moses, smote once more the river; when, lo! the sacred river, together with another of the Egyptian gods—the frog!†—was once more made the instrument of their punishment. Myriads of frogs came up from the river, and from all the canals and reservoirs which it fed, and overspread the land. No place was free from them—from the hut of the peasant to the palace of the king. Even though the frog were a sacred creature, a people so scrupulously clean and nice as the Egyptians, must have been terribly annoyed to find that the unseemly reptiles penetrated to all places, polluting their choicest food and most costly furniture. They found them everywhere—in their ovens, in their kneading-troughs, and even in their couches and beds.



[Egyptian Couches.(3)]

This marvel also the Egyptian priests managed on some small scale to imitate; but as they could do nothing to *remove* the nuisance, Pharaoh began to be somewhat troubled. He sent for Moses and Aaron, and begged them to entreat Jehovah to remove the frogs, in which case he would no longer refuse to let the Hebrews go to render Him sacrifice. Accordingly, at the time appointed by himself, "the morrow," the frogs died away from the houses, the villages, and the fields, "and they gathered them together in heaps, and the land

* Page 141.

§ The frog was one of the sacred animals consecrated to the sun, and considered as an emblem of the Divine inspiration in its inflations.

stunk with them." But when the king saw there was respite, he again hardened his heart, and refused to let the people go, regardless of the promise he had made.

Therefore Moses and Aaron were commanded to smite the dust of the earth, from which instantly arose myriads of gnats,* or mosquitoes, an insect plague well known to Egypt during summer, but from which the country is free until nearly three months after the time at which this plague must have been inflicted. As these most insatiable and persevering insects form by far the greatest annoyance and distress—because the most unintermitting—to which life, in warm climates, is subject, the prospect of being exposed to it three months earlier than usual, and of being thus deprived of their usual season of relief, must have been almost maddening to the Egyptians—especially when the insects were produced in such multitudes as on this occasion. It seems surprising to find that the priests were unable to imitate this miracle; but, perhaps, the smallness of the object may, in some measure, account for this, as it may have prevented that handling and management to which serpents and frogs were subject. However, this time they confessed that there was something in this beyond their art and power—that it was no human feat of legerdemain, but that they saw in it the finger of a god, or the supernatural agency of some demon. This was, indeed, the only excuse by which they could hope to cover their own failure; and the acknowledgment was of no immediate value, since it did not ascribe the power and the glory to Jehovah, the only true God. They were not themselves prevented by it from continuing to attempt their emulative wonders; and the heart of the king remained unmollified.

Hitherto, it appears, the plagues had been common to the Egyptians and the Hebrews. We can easily understand that the latter were included in these visitations, to punish them for their participation in the idolatries of Egypt, and for their unbelief. But as this may have contributed to prevent the Egyptians from seeing the finger of the God of the Hebrews in particular, in the calamities with which they had been visited, a distinction was henceforth made, and the land of Goshen was exempted from the plagues by which the rest of Egypt was desolated.

The next plague, being the fourth, is of rather doubtful interpretation. The word by which it is described denotes *a mixture*, whence some suppose that it consisted of an immense number of beasts of prey, of various species, by which the land was overspread.† But it seems better to understand that every kind of annoying insect is intended. In the preceding plague there was one species—now there are many. There are, however, reasons which might suggest that the Egyptian beetle is rather intended. It is not said that the priests even attempted to imitate this plague. But whether so or not, the annoyance was so great that Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron, and proposed a compromise which had occurred to him—namely, that they should offer to Jehovah the sacrifices about which they were so anxious in their own land of Goshen, without going away into the wilderness. But Moses, with great presence of mind and clear truth, replied, that the worship of Jehovah required the sacrifice of animals which the Egyptians worshipped, and never offered in sacrifice; (4) and that the Egyptians would certainly rise upon the Hebrews and slay them if any attempt to offer such sacrifices were made in their presence. On these grounds he insisted that the Israelites should go three days' journey into the wilderness, as the Lord had commanded. The king saw the force of these reasons; and while he gave a reluctant consent that they should go into the wilderness, he stipulated that they should not go very far away. In this, and still more clearly in subsequent circumstances, the king indicates his suspicion of the truth—that, under this excuse, the real wish and intention was to ensure the opportunity of an unmolested march to such a distance as might afford the Hebrews an opportunity of making their escape altogether. It is well to be just even to Pharaoh, by thus intimating that the real question before him—as well understood by *both* parties—was not merely the ostensible matter, whether the Hebrews were to be allowed a week's holiday, to go and hold their feast in the desert—but, really, whether the useful and customary services of the Hebrews were

* See Pictorial Bible on Exod. viii. 16, for the reason on which this interpretation, rather than that of "lice," is chosen.

† So the Targum of Jonathan; also Jarchi and Aben Ezra.

henceforth to be dispensed with altogether, and a serious public loss and a great disturbance of existing relations be incurred. This was the Egyptian view of the question; with the further circumstance, that there seemed cause to apprehend that the Hebrews, if allowed to acquire an independent position, might ultimately resolve themselves into a very dangerous adverse power on the frontiers—whether in the desert as pastoral nomades, or as a settled people in Palestine. Viewing the matter thus, as the Egyptian king unquestionably did, we may cease to wonder that he "hardened his heart" so often. For we are firmly persuaded that there is not now any state having bondsmen, however acquired, which would consent to part with them, under such circumstances, with much more readiness than did the king of Egypt, or which would require much less urgent compulsions than those to which that monarch ultimately submitted. No doubt the Hebrews had a right to be free, and no one could justly detain them in bondage; but, again, to illustrate the position of that monarch, let us recollect that *he* had not brought them into bondage. They had laboured for a century in the public service; whence the king, or few Egyptians then living, had ever known them otherwise than as bondsmen, and few, if any, Hebrews then living could remember the days when Israel was free.

Moses expressed his readiness to intercede with Jehovah for the removal of this plague; venturing to add the caution, "Let not Pharaoh deal deceitfully any more." But no sooner had this calamity passed, than the king, heedless of this admonition, and of his own word, continued his refusal to allow the departure of the Israelites.

This second breach of faith brought down a judgment more deadly than any of those which had preceded. This was a grievous murrain, by which numbers of the different kinds of cattle kept by the Egyptians were slain, while no harm befell the flocks and herds of the Israelites in Goshen. This distinction had been predicted to Pharaoh, and he sent to assure himself whether it had taken place. Nevertheless, his heart still remained unsoftened, and he still refused to let Israel go.

The infliction with which this obduracy was punished consisted of an ulcerous inflammation, of the most painful and violent description, which broke forth not only upon man, but upon such of the cattle as the murrain had spared. As this ulcer appeared upon the scrupulously clean persons of the priestly "magicians," as well as upon others, their humiliation was so great that they slunk from the scene, thus relinquishing even that languid show of rivalry and opposition which they had lately manifested. This was the sixth plague.

The seventh was introduced with unusual solemnity. Moses was charged to make the usual demand of the king—"Let my people go, that they may serve me;" with the addition, "For else I will, at this time, send all my plagues on thyself, and on thy servants, and on thy people; *that thou mayest know that there is none like me in all the earth.*" The king was further reminded that Jehovah could stretch forth his hand, and cut off him and all his people with pestilence: but he had been preserved, that, through these repeated exhibitions, the power of the God of the Hebrews might be evinced, and his name declared far and near. The visitation thus announced, and the time for it fixed,—"to-morrow, about this time," and which came on at the appointed time, when Moses lifted up his rod towards heaven,—consisted of such a storm of hail as had never before been known in Egypt, accompanied by terrible thunders, and by lightning "that ran along the ground." Seeing that rain is exceedingly rare, and hail almost unknown in Egypt, so formidable a hail-storm as this, predicted as it was, was one of the greatest marvels that could be produced in such a climate as that of Egypt. A heavy fall of snow in July would not, in our own country, be so great a phenomenon as a heavy hail-storm at any time in Egypt. And this storm was so heavy, and the hail-stones of such prodigious size and weight, that it killed man and beast, broke the trees, and destroyed the standing crop of flax and barley; the wheat and the rye escaped, as their condition of growth was less advanced. This has already been stated (p. 165). All these effects had been foretold; and the prediction was mercifully coupled with the advice that those who believed, and feared the word of Jehovah, should place their servants and cattle under shelter before the appointed time arrived; and the effect which had been produced upon the Egyptians is shown

by the fact that many of "Pharaoh's servants" did believe in what must have seemed so exceedingly unlikely, and caused their servants and cattle "to flee into the houses." There was no hail in the land of Goshen.

This visitation was so dreadful that it made considerable impression upon the king, who sent hastily for Moses and Aaron, and plainly confessed, "I have once more sinned. JEHOVAH is righteous, and I and my people are wicked. Entreat JEHOVAH (for it is enough) that there be no more mighty thunderings and hail; and I will let you go, and ye shall stay no longer." Perhaps he sincerely felt and intended this at the time; but Moses, who knew his heart far better than it was known to himself, plainly intimated that he placed no reliance on this promise, although he engaged to obtain an immediate cessation of the storm.

He was right in his anticipation; for when the old demand was renewed, the king repeated his refusal. Then the arrival of an army of locusts was announced, which should destroy every green thing that the hail had spared. In announcing this visitation, mention is made of one very important object of this series of wonders, in addition to those which have been already noticed; this is, that the faith of the Israelites might be confirmed—that they themselves might be convinced of the supreme and universal power of the God of their fathers,—"That thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son's son, what I have wrought in Egypt, and my signs which I have done among them; that *ye* may know that I am JEHOVAH."

The threatened infliction seemed so appalling to those about the king, after the loss and ruin which the preceding plague had occasioned, that they ventured to remonstrate:—"Knowest thou not yet that Egypt is ruined?" was the emphatic question which they connected with their advice that the Israelites should be allowed to depart, rather than that such ruinous inflictions should be brought upon the land. If his own courtiers and counsellors were of this opinion, the king could not but infer that, in the course he was pursuing, he was no longer supported by the general opinion of the Egyptian people, who now lamented his obstinacy, and had become desirous that, as the least of many evils, the claim of the Israelites should be granted. After so much time had passed, and so many calamities, one after another, had befallen the whole of the Egyptian people, we may easily understand that the whole attention of both nations was entirely engrossed in watching this great contest, and in speculating on its probable results. Probably all labour was intermitted, save that necessary for present subsistence; and it is not to be imagined that the labour of the Israelites in the public service was now enforced. Released from their burdens, they unquestionably congregated in Goshen, where alone they could be exempt from the miseries which afflicted the Egyptians; and where they would be in readiness, as a congregated body, for the simultaneous move which was, on their part, the hoped result of the contest. They could not but have gradually acquired confidence in their God and in his prophet, as they thus sat watching the progress of events, and witnessed the gathering dismay of the Egyptians.

The king, perceiving the feeling which was entertained by his own people, sent to have Moses and Aaron brought back; and to make their ulterior intentions manifest, he asked, "Who of them were to go, and who to stay?" and when Moses, in reply, said plainly that their wives, their children, their cattle, and all that they had, must go with them, the king was highly provoked, and upbraided them for their intentions, which, though professedly concealed under the show of holding a feast to the Lord, were transparently manifested, by this demand, to contemplate nothing less than an escape from Egypt altogether. He said that the original demand was that the men only should go, and to that he was now ready to agree; but he would consent to nothing more. On which he commanded Moses and Aaron to be thrust from his presence.

Then came the locusts. Taking for their appearance the very latest date which the history will allow, the arrival was so much earlier than usual, as to render it a circumstance not to be expected in the ordinary course of events; and besides this, it should be observed that, although locusts are common in Arabia, they appear with comparative rarity in Egypt; the Red Sea, forming a sort of barrier against them, as they are not formed for crossing seas, or for long

flights. Yet, on the present occasion, the locusts were enabled, by the aid of a "strong east wind," to cross that sea from Arabia; and this is another remarkable circumstance, as the winds which prevalently blow in Egypt are six months from the north, and six months from the south. To those whom reading or travel has made acquainted with the appearance and ravages of these destructive vermin, the notice which the Scriptural narrative here takes of them will seem remarkably striking and true:—"The locusts went up over all the land of Egypt, and rested in all the coasts of Egypt. Very grievous were they: before them were no such locusts as they, neither after them shall there be such. *For they covered the face of the whole earth*, so that the land was darkened; and *they ate up every green herb upon the earth*, and every tree, the fruit of which the hail had left; *and not any green thing remained on the trees, or on the herbs of the field through all the land of Egypt.*" As we are told that the locusts ate up every green thing which the hail had spared, the young crop of wheat and rye must be included. This calamity was so very formidable, that Pharaoh delayed not to send for Moses and Aaron. He avowed to them his fault, and begged for one reprieve more. He obtained it by means of a strong north-westerly wind,* which in one night so completely swept the locusts away into the Red Sea, that not one could be found in all the land of Egypt. But when relief had thus been given, it appeared that the king would not allow the Hebrews to take their families and flocks, though he was still willing that the *men* should take the desired journey into the wilderness.

Therefore a new and most extraordinary plague was brought upon the land. In this land, where even a cloud seldom throws an obscuration on the clear face of the heavens, there was for three days a thick darkness,—a darkness which, in the emphatic language of Scripture, "*might be felt*," and which, we are told, prevented the people from seeing one another. Considering the rarity of *any* obscuration in the valley of the Nile, and that the sun was one of the chief of the gods the Egyptians worshipped, their consternation may be partly imagined, and is strongly represented in the Scriptural narrative, by their total inaction,—"No one rose from his place for three days." All this while the Israelites in the land of Goshen enjoyed the ordinary light of day. As we have no intimation of the agency employed in producing this remarkable darkness in Egypt, while the Hebrews had light in their dwellings, we must be content to leave this miracle in the characteristic obscurity in which, more than any of the others, it is involved.†

This visitation, so well calculated to appal and terrify the Egyptians, compelled the king to relax his previous determination. He now declared himself willing to let the men and their families go, but he wished to keep the flocks and herds as security for their return. Moses represented that they were going for the express purpose of offering sacrifices to Jehovah, for which cattle would be necessary, and it could not be known till they arrived in the wilderness what number of cattle would be required. Therefore he declared in the most peremptory manner, "Our cattle also shall go with us; *there shall not a hoof be left behind.*" But the proud king was determined not to relinquish this last and only point of security which would remain to him. Moses, perceiving his obstinacy, proceeded to deliver his last and most awful message from Jehovah, which cannot be given in language more condensed or half so expressive as his own:—"Thus saith Jehovah; About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt; and *all the first-born in the land of Egypt shall die;* from the first-born of Pharaoh that sitteth on the throne, to the first-born of the maid-servant that is behind the mill; and all the first-born of cattle. And *there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt*, such as there was none like it nor shall be any more. But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that Jehovah doth make a difference between the Egyptians and Israel. And all these thy servants [the councillors and nobles then present] shall come down unto me, and bow themselves unto

* Heb. a *sea-wind*, meaning a wind blowing from the Mediterranean. This is, of course, a westerly wind in Syria; and hence the word is usually regarded as equivalent to westerly wind. But a wind blowing from the sea must be north-westerly in Egypt.

† Some considerations on the subject may be found in the 'Pictorial Bible,' note on Exod. x. 23.

me, saying, "Get thee out, and all the people that follow thee. And after that I will go out." Such a message delivered in so high a tone did not fail to exasperate the haughty king, who exclaimed to Moses, in sentences rendered abrupt by passion, "Get thee from me. —Take heed to thyself.—See my face no more :—for in the day that thou seest my face thou shalt die." To which Moses, with most impressive solemnity, only answered, "Thou hast spoken well. I will see thy face again no more." He then went out from the presence of Pharaoh in great anger, and withdrew finally from the court to join his own people in the land of Goshen.

His presence was necessary there to make the needful preparations for that departure which he now saw to be close at hand. And here it will be observed that the judgments exercised upon the Egyptians, with the manner in which their own affairs had been made of such absorbing importance, had, for the present, made the Israelites very tractable, and disposed to receive and follow the directions of Moses with attention and respect. It also appears that after what had passed, Moses was now held in great honour among the Egyptians themselves, and that not only by the mass of the people, but by the chiefs and nobles of the court.* This was natural. Probably they would have made a god of him, if he had been one of themselves and had acted with them or on their behalf.

It had been usual with Moses to announce a plague only the day before it came; but on this occasion four days elapsed, a circumstance which may probably have lulled the fears which the king could not but have at first entertained from the awful threat of one whose words had not hitherto in any one instance fallen to the ground.

Among the Hebrews in Goshen the most important circumstance of this time was the institution of the Passover. It was peculiar to this institution that it was founded to commemorate an event which had not yet occurred, and that so arranged that it was in the act of being celebrated for the first time, at the very instant when the event occurred which it was destined ever after to signalize. The institution was therefore established with a prophetic reference to a coming event—that event being the one of which Moses had spoken to Pharaoh—the destruction of the first-born of Egypt.

More precisely, the Passover was ordained for a perpetual memorial of the deliverance of the Israelites from the destroying angel, when he *passed over* or spared the houses of the Israelites, but destroyed the first-born of the Egyptians.

Each family had been previously required, at the beginning of the month *Abib* (which from henceforth was made the first month of the sacred year), to take a lamb without spot or blemish upon the *tenth* day of the month, to keep it up, and to kill it on the *fourteenth*, *between the two evenings*.† They were to roast it entire, not breaking a bone of it, and to eat it in haste, with bitter herbs and unleavened bread, standing, with their loins girded, their sandals on their feet, and their staves in their hands, after the manner and posture of hurried pilgrims about to set forth instantly upon a long journey, through a dreary wilderness, towards a pleasant land where their toil and travel was to cease. And they were also required to sprinkle the blood of the paschal lamb, by means of a bunch of hyssop dipped therein, upon the lintel, or head-posts, and upon the two side-posts of the doors of their houses, to save them from the destroyer, who, seeing this token, would *pass over* their houses without entering to smite the first-born. When these instructions were delivered, "the people bowed their head and worshipped, and went away and did as Jehovah had commanded," and waited in their houses for the catastrophe which was to work their deliverance.‡

The tremendous night was not long delayed. While the Jews were celebrating this newly instituted feast—at midnight—the destroying angel went forth in a pestilence, and smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt,—"from the first-born of Pharaoh, that sat on his throne, to the first-born of the captive that lay in the dungeon; and all the first-born of cattle." And

* Exod. xi. 3.

† The former of which began at the ninth hour, and the latter at the twelfth, or sunset.

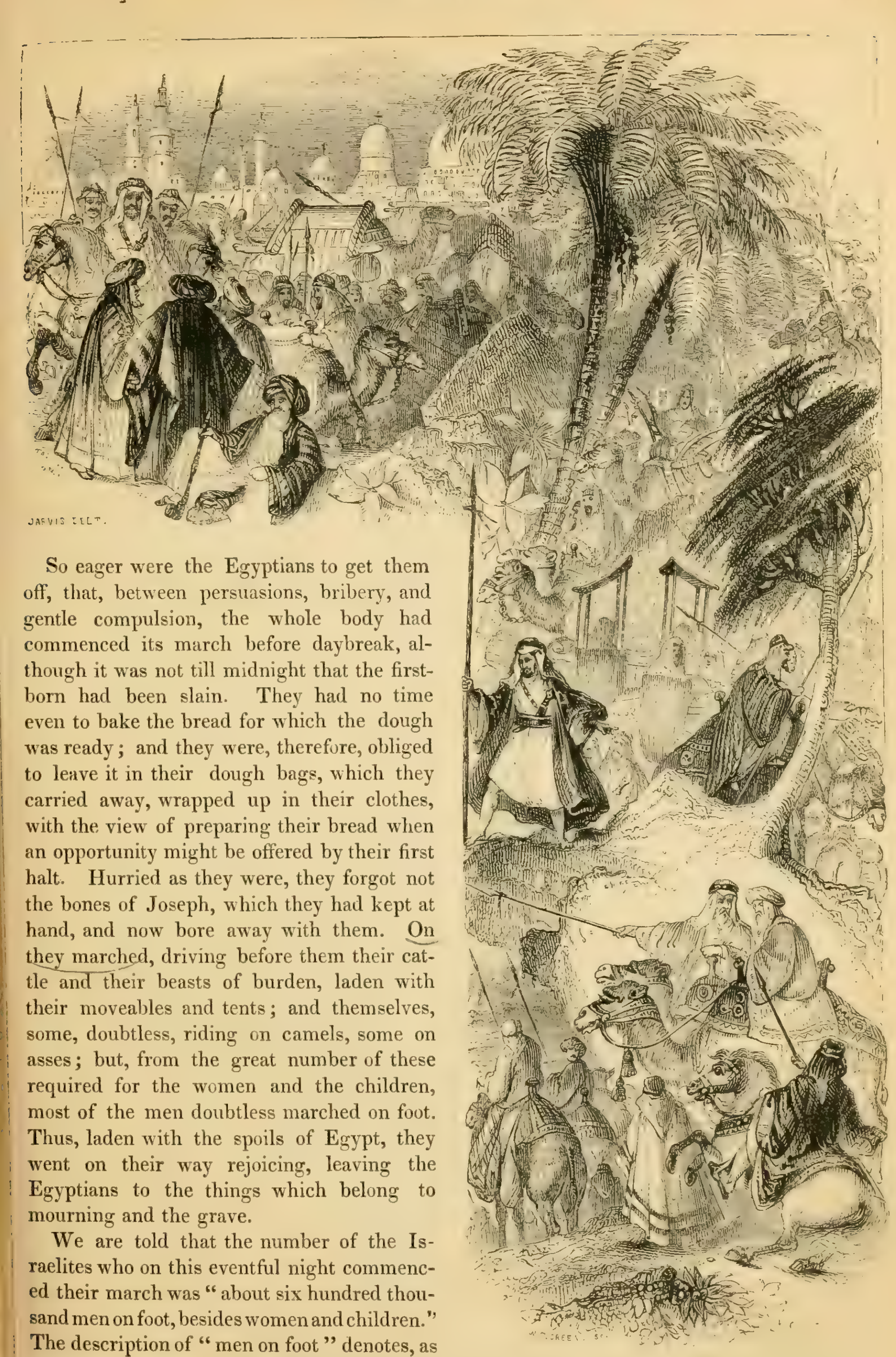
‡ Exod. xii. The clear though very brief account of the institution which we have given is, with slight alterations, from Hales, ii. 180.

there was a great cry in Egypt—lamentation and bitter weeping—for there was not a house in which there was not one dead.

The effect of this dreadful blow was exactly such as Moses had foretold. The king, his nobles, and the Egyptian people, rose in sorrow from their beds that night. The shrieks of the living, with the groans of those about to die, breaking in upon the stillness of the night—the darkness of which must greatly have aggravated the horror and confusion of that hour—made the people fancy they were all doomed to destruction, and that the work of death would not cease till they had all perished. The king himself was filled with horror and alarm. Without truly repenting his obduracy, he bitterly lamented its effects. It appeared to him that the only method of arresting the progress of the destruction was to send the Hebrews instantly away—in the fear that every moment they tarried would prove the loss of a thousand lives to Egypt. He therefore sent to Moses and Aaron by that very night—that hour—to tell them, "Get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go and serve the Lord as ye said; take *also your flocks and herds*, and begone; and bless me also." And the Egyptian people also, says the Scriptural narrative, were urgent upon them, to send them away in haste; for they said, "We are all dead men." In their anxiety to get them off, lest every moment of their stay should prove the last to themselves or those dear to them, the Egyptians would have done anything to satisfy and oblige them. This favourable disposition had been foreseen from the beginning, and the Hebrews had been instructed by Moses to take advantage of it, by borrowing ornaments of precious metal—"Jewels of gold and jewels of silver," with rich dresses, from the Egyptians. On the principle that, "all that a man hath he will give for his life," there can be no doubt but that, under circumstances which made them consider their own lives in jeopardy, and when the losses they had sustained were calculated to make their finery seem of small value in their sight, the Egyptians were quite as ready to lend as the Hebrews to borrow. The women also were authorised to borrow from the Egyptian females: and we may easily believe that their exertions added much to the large amount of valuable property which was extracted from the fears of the Egyptians. With whatever understanding these valuable articles were given and received, the ultimate effect is, that in this final settlement, the Hebrews received something like wages—though, as such, inadequate—for the long services they had rendered to the Egyptians. (5)



[Ornaments of Egyptian Females. "Jewels of gold and jewels of silver."]



So eager were the Egyptians to get them off, that, between persuasions, bribery, and gentle compulsion, the whole body had commenced its march before daybreak, although it was not till midnight that the first-born had been slain. They had no time even to bake the bread for which the dough was ready; and they were, therefore, obliged to leave it in their dough bags, which they carried away, wrapped up in their clothes, with the view of preparing their bread when an opportunity might be offered by their first halt. Hurried as they were, they forgot not the bones of Joseph, which they had kept at hand, and now bore away with them. On they marched, driving before them their cattle and their beasts of burden, laden with their moveables and tents; and themselves, some, doubtless, riding on camels, some on asses; but, from the great number of these required for the women and the children, most of the men doubtless marched on foot. Thus, laden with the spoils of Egypt, they went on their way rejoicing, leaving the Egyptians to the things which belong to mourning and the grave.

We are told that the number of the Israelites who on this eventful night commenced their march was "about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children." The description of "men on foot" denotes, as elsewhere appears, men fit to bear arms, excluding therefore not only those who are too young, but those who are too old for such service.

As this prime class of the community is usually in the proportion of one-fourth of the whole population, the result would give nearly two millions and a half as the number of the posterity of Jacob. This number is so very high, that it has seemed incredible to many. We must confess, that it is difficult to realise the presence of so vast a host, with their flocks and herds, and to form an idea of the immense area they would cover, were only standing-room given to them, much more where encamped under tents;—and when we further consider the length and breadth of their moving body on a march, as well as the quantities of water they would require, we may be tempted to conclude that a much smaller number would amply justify the promises of God, and would render many circumstances in the ensuing portion of their history more easy to be understood. Besides this, the ancient manner of notation afforded temptations and facilities for the corruption of numbers, whence it happens that the most disputed texts of Scripture, and those in which, as the copies now stand, there are palpable contradictions, are those which contain numerical statements. We are not insensible to these considerations, and have endeavoured to assign them all the weight which they are entitled to bear. But seeing that the present number, high as it is, has some support from collateral evidence, and from the considerations to which we have already adverted, and, above all, reflecting that the present number is a positive circumstance, whereas all alteration could only be conjectural,* we deem it the best and safest course to take the number as we find it in the present copies of the Pentateuch. But besides the descendants of Jacob, there was a large "mixed multitude," which went out of Egypt on this occasion. Who they were is not clearly stated; but it would appear that the mass was formed of foreign slaves, belonging to the principal persons among the Hebrews, with a good number, probably, belonging to the Egyptians, who were glad to take the opportunity of escaping with the Israelites. Besides this, there were manifestly a considerable number of Egyptians of the poorer class, who perhaps expected to better their condition in some way, or had other very good reasons for leaving Egypt: indeed, as it did not turn out that the Israelites were anything the better for their presence, we are free to confess that we think it likely they were chiefly such thieves, vagabonds, adventurers, and debtors as could no longer stay safely in Egypt.

The circumstance that Moses was so well acquainted with the number of the Israelites



[Egyptian Registration or Census.]

* So conjectural that while some strike off one cipher, reducing 600,000 to 60,000; others are not content without taking off two, thus reaching the certainty to the very convenient and manageable number of 6,000. Another conjecture has been that the 600,000 includes *all* the population, and not merely the men fit to bear arms; but this is precluded by the terms of the text, "besides women and children."

before they left Egypt, intimates that an account of their numbers had not long before been taken by the Egyptians. That ingenious people employed very early, if they did not invent, the practice of taking a census of what is called the effective part of the population; and from them, unquestionably, the Israelites, under the direction of Moses, adopted this useful custom. In all such enumerations, in ancient times, the women and children were not included, and their number is never stated. But probably they were able to form an estimate of the proportion which the numbered part of the population bore to the whole; although their conclusions in this matter must have been more uncertain than our own, which have been founded on repeated actual enumerations of portions of the entire population which were never included in the ancient enumerations.

The point from which the Hebrew host started on their march was Rameses, one of the "treasure cities" which they had built for Pharaoh in the land of Goshen, and which seems to have become the chief place in the territory they occupied. The difficulties in tracing their march begin at the very first stage. We have given our full attention to the subject, with the advantage of consulting all that has been said upon it since the appearance of the early parts of the 'Pictorial Bible,' in which all the questions connected with the general subject (including the passage of the Red Sea) were fully considered as they arose. The result of this reconsideration is a determination—taken with all deference to the advocates of other alternatives—to adhere to the views stated and expounded in that work. We have reason to know that these views have been satisfactory to many who have carefully studied the subject; and we have found that in attempting to remove or obviate the details which, in the first instance, might seem most liable to objection, we have only encumbered ourselves with new difficulties, more serious than those which we sought to remove. Under these circumstances it is our design to assume historically that which has been stated argumentatively in the 'Pictorial Bible'—without, however, precluding ourselves from the use of such facts as have since then been acquired, or of such considerations as have resulted from more recent thought.

There are two preliminary questions, satisfactory information on which would much assist us in understanding the early part of their journey. The first is, the situation of Rameses, from which they started; and the second, the point to which their journey was, in the first instance, directed. On the first point no very satisfactory information can be obtained. It is, indeed, not quite clear that any particular locality is intended, or whether the land of Goshen, in the large indefinite sense, may not be denoted by "the land of Rameses." But some information is reflected upon the first by the answer to the second of these questions, which answer is, that the destination which was in the first instance contemplated, was doubtless the wilderness of Sinai. The land of Goshen appears most evidently to have bordered on, if it did not include, part of the tract over which the nearest and most convenient road to the peninsula of Sinai from the banks of the Nile has always passed. This is nearly the line in which, in after ages, a canal was made connecting the Nile with the Gulf of Suez; and that, while it is the nearest route, it is the only one which offers a supply of water, is a consideration which doubtless as much recommended it in ancient times to those going from Egypt to Sinai or Arabia, as it does now recommend it to the great caravan of pilgrimage which yearly journeys from Cairo to Mecca. The route of this caravan is the same, as far as the head of the Gulf of Suez, as one would take which proceeds to the Desert of Sinai. We shall therefore presume that this *was* the route taken.

If the Hebrews were to have gone direct to take possession of the Promised Land, their nearest road would have been "by the way of the Philistines;" that is, by the usual route from Egypt to Gaza. But the Philistines were, unquestionably, the most powerful and warlike people then in Palestine, and there was already some ill-blood between them and the Israelites,* and would be likely to offer a most formidable opposition to them at the very first step of their progress. The Hebrews were in fact altogether unfit to face such enemies, or any enemies whatever: they were not yet even fit to be a nation; and, therefore, instead of being at once led to their promised heritage, it was the Divine will that they should be con-

* See page 146.

ducted into the Desert, there to be trained, disciplined, and instructed, so as to fit them for their future destinies. Moses knew that their first destination was the wilderness of Sinai; for when the Lord appeared to him in Horeb, it was announced that the bondaged children of Abraham should be brought to worship God in that very mountain.

The Hebrews left Rameses and proceeded on their way. And now it appeared that the Lord provided against their going astray, by placing a miraculous column of cloud to go before them by day and mark out their road; while by night it became a column of fire and gave light to all the camp. This was important, also, as evincing that Moses was not acting by his own authority, and that however highly he was entitled to their confidence and respect, they had a more unerring Guide and a more exalted Protector.

Their first day's journey brought them to Succoth. We relinquish the notion which we once entertained that Succoth may have been at or near the place (Birket el Hadj or Pilgrim's Pool) where the great pilgrim caravan encamps and makes its final arrangements for its journey. We think it, upon the whole, more likely that the point from which the Hebrews departed *in the first instance* may have been in that neighbourhood. Succoth, therefore, must be sought somewhere about a day's journey in the direction towards Suez. The name denotes *tents* or *booths*, and it is useless to seek its site, as the name appears only to denote a place where caravans passing that way usually encamped.

Their next resting-place of which we are told was "Etham, on the edge of the wilderness." But in this, as in other cases, we are not to suppose that the places which are named are the only places at which they rested; and in the present instance the distance may suggest that this Etham was the third rather than the second encampment. The halting-places of caravans are in these desert regions so much determined by the presence of wells, that in connexion with the circumstance of its being situated "on the edge of the wilderness," there is not much difficulty in concluding that Etham is represented by the modern Adjeroud, which forms the



[Adjeroud.]

third stage of the pilgrim's caravan, and where there is an old fortress, a small village and copious well of indifferent water. This place is about eleven miles to the north-west of Suez. The neighbourhood seems indeed to be on the edge of the wilderness: for what M. du Bois-Aymé says of Bir-Suez (which *he* identifies with Etham) is true also of Adjeroud, that, in effect, it appears to be towards the extremity of the desert: for from hence the sea is seen

to make a bend to the west, and by joining the high chain of Mount Attaka to terminate the desert to the south. The journey to this point had been for the most part over a desert, the surface of which is composed of hard gravel, often strewed with pebbles

They had now arrived near the head of the Red Sea, and also, as we suppose, at the limit of the three days' journey into the wilderness for which they had applied. It is, therefore, evident that their next move must decide their future course, and convey to the Egyptians a clear and decisive intimation of their intentions. If they designed to do as they had all along declared to be their only wish, they would stay at this place and proceed to celebrate the feast to Jehovah, of which so much had been said: but, if they intended to escape altogether, they would resume their journey, and, passing by the head of the Red Sea, strike off into the desert. And here God, who knew that the king of Egypt had so far recovered his consternation that he was determined to pursue and drive them back, if they made any move indicating an intention to escape, directed a move which must have been most unexpected to all parties, and which could not to any indifferent spectator have seemed the result of the most gross and fatal infatuation.

About the head of the Gulf of Suez a desert plain extends for ten or twelve miles to west



[Suez from the north-east.]

and north of the city of that name. On the west this plain is bounded by the chain of Attaka, which comes down towards the sea in a north-easterly direction. Opposite Suez this chain is seen at a considerable distance, but, as we advance southward, the mountains rapidly approach the sea, and proportionately contract the breadth of the valley; and the chain terminates at the sea, and seems, in the distant view, to shut up the valley at Ras-el-Attaka, or Cape Attaka, twelve miles below Suez. But on approaching this point, ample room is found to pass beyond; and on passing beyond we find ourselves in a broad alluvial plain, forming the mouth of the valley of Bedea. This plain is on the other or southern side nearly shut up by the termination of another chain of these mountains, which extend between the Nile and the western shore of the Red Sea. Any further progress in this direction would be impossible to a large army, especially when encumbered with flocks and herds, and with women, children, and baggage; and this from the manner in which the rocks, the promontories, and

the cliffs advance on the western shore. And, besides, any advance in this direction would be suicidal to a body desiring to escape from Egypt, as they would have the Red Sea between them and Arabia Proper, and could only get involved among the plains and valleys which separate the mountain-chains of Egyptian Arabia.

The valley of Bedea, which opens to the Red Sea in the broad plain to which we have brought the reader, narrows as it proceeds westward towards the Nile. It forms a fine road-way between the valley of the Nile and the Red Sea, and, as such, has in all ages been one of the most frequented routes in all the country, being traversed by all parties and caravans which desire to proceed from the neighbourhood of Cairo, or places to the south of Cairo, to Suez, or to places lying beyond the head of the gulf.

Now, the Hebrew host being at Etham, and their next step from thence being of the utmost importance, they were directed, not—as might obviously have been expected—to pass round the head of the gulf into the Sinai peninsula, but to proceed southward, between the mountains of Attaka and the *western* shore of the gulf, and, after passing the Ras-el-Attaka, to encamp in the plain into which the valley of Bedea opens. The more thoroughly any one makes himself acquainted with the topography of this region, the more obvious and reasonable, we are persuaded, will seem to him this explanation of the text—"Turn and encamp before Pi-ha-hiroth [the mouth of the ridge], between Migdol and the sea, over against Baal-zephon: before it ye shall encamp by the sea." As the names Migdol and Baal-zephon are not now recognisable anywhere about the head of the gulf,* no facts or inferences can be deduced from them; but an important confirmation is derived from the circumstance that we are told that, in consequence of the move which was made, the Hebrew host were shut up between the sea and the mountains, without any means of escape, unless through the sea, when the retreat in the rear was cut off.

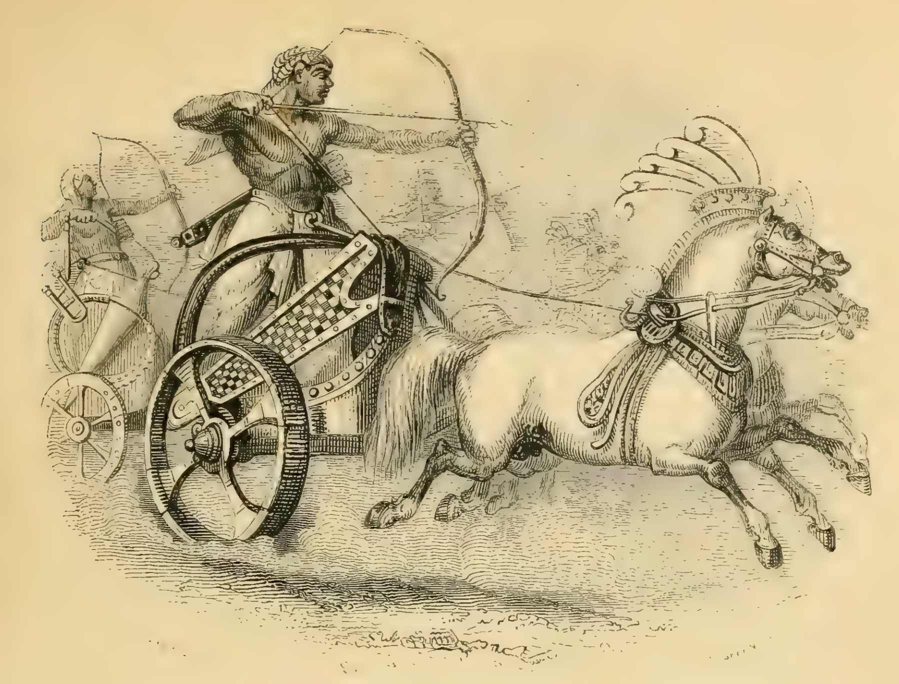
Many have thought they found cause to wonder at this extraordinary movement, which placed the Hebrews in a position of such inextricable difficulty, forgetting that this was the very purpose of God, that the prospect of an extraordinary advantage might tempt the Egyptians on to their own destruction, and bring them within the reach of those agencies by which God intended to act against them. The wonder which the reader may feel is exactly the wonder which the king of Egypt felt, and by which he was led on to his ruin.

The movement was made; and the thousands of Israel encamped in the plain of Bedea.

The days which had passed had given the Egyptians time to recover from some portion of their panic; and their first feeling, of unmixed horror and alarm, gave place to considerable resentment and regret, on the king's part, that he had so suddenly conceded all the points which had been contested between him and Moses, and had allowed them all to depart; and as for his subjects, such of them as had a profitable interest in the labours of the Israelites would, to some extent, join in the king's feelings, as soon as their bondsmen took any course to intimate that they intended to escape; and the same intimation would not fail to alarm those who had "lent" to the Hebrews their "jewels of silver and jewels of gold," and who by this time had found leisure to think that they had too easily parted with their wealth. Thus it seems that the course which the Israelites might take after their arrival at Etham was regarded with much anxiety by the Egyptians, who took care to be informed of all their movements.

When, therefore, the king heard not only that they had taken a decisive move from Etham, but, through some astonishing infatuation, had so moved as to become "entangled in the land," and "shut in by the wilderness," he hastened to avail himself of the extraordinary advantage which they had placed in his hands. "He made ready his chariot, and took his people with him." He mustered not less than six hundred chariots, which are said to be "all the [war] chariots of Egypt." This is in correspondence with the sculptures, which show that the Egyptians made great use in war of such chariots as our first cut exhibits. A

* *Migdol* was probably *a tower*, as the name imports, and may seem to have been on the mountains which hem in the valley. *Baal-zephon*, meaning *the Northern Baal* or *Lord*, would seem to have been a town or temple situated somewhere in the plain of Medea, or over against it on the *eastern* shore of the sea.



[Egyptian War Chariots.]

[Egyptian Soldiers of different Corps.]

large body of infantry* was also assembled, and the pursuit commenced. Their light, unencumbered march was, no doubt, much more quickly performed than that of the Israelites to the same place.

One of the citations in Eusebius from the lost history of Manetho, the Egyptian priest, says, "The Heliopolitans relate that the king, with a great army, *accompanied by the sacred animals*, pursued after the Jews, *who had carried off with them the substance of the Egyptians*."† This takes notice of two facts not mentioned by Moses, but not at all disagreeing with his statement, namely, that, for their protection against the God of Israel, the Egyptians took with them their sacred animals, by which means the Lord executed judgment upon the [bestial] gods of Egypt, as had been foretold (Exod. xii. 12); and then that to recover the substance which the Hebrews had "borrowed" was one of the objects of the pursuit.

We do not agree with those who think that the king of Egypt came upon the encamped Hebrews through the valley of Bedea, in the plain at the mouth of which they were encamped. As he was so glad to find how they had "entangled themselves in the land," he was not likely to take a course which would deprive him of all the advantages derivable from their apparent oversight. This he would do by coming upon them through the valley of Bedea, for this would have left open to them the alternative of escaping from their position by the way they entered; whereas, by coming the same way they had come, he shut up that door of escape; and, if they fled before him, left them no other visible resource but to march up the valley of Bedea, back to Egypt, before the Egyptian troops. That this was really the advantage to himself which the king saw in their position, and that it was his object to drive them before him back to Egypt through this valley, or to destroy them if they offered to resist, we have not the least doubt: and it is unlikely that he would take any road but that which would enable him to secure these benefits.

The Egyptians, being satisfied that they had secured their prey, and that it was impossible for their fugitive bondsmen to escape but by returning to Egypt, were in no haste to assail them. They were also, themselves, probably, wearied by their rapid march. They therefore encamped for the night—for it was towards evening when they arrived—intending, probably, to give effect to their intentions in the morning.

As for the Israelites, the sight of their old oppressors struck them with terror. There was no faith or spirit in them. They knew not how to value their newly-found liberty. They deplored the rash adventure in which they had engaged; and their servile minds looked back with regret and envy upon the enslaved condition which they had so lately deplored. Moses knew them well enough not to be surprised that they assailed him as the author of all the calamities to which they were now exposed. "Is it because there were no graves in Egypt," said they, "that thou hast taken us away to die in the wilderness? Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness." This is one specimen of a mode of feeling and character among this spiritless and perverse people of which Moses had seen something already, and of which he had soon occasion to see much more. One might be disposed to judge of their feelings the more leniently, attributing them to the essential operation of personal slavery in enslaving the mind, by debasing its higher tones of feeling and character, did we not know that the same characteristics of mind and temper constantly broke out among this remarkable people very long after the generation which knew the slavery of Egypt had passed away.

Moses did not deign to remonstrate with them or to vindicate himself. It seems that the Divine intention had been previously intimated to him; for he answered, with that usual emphasis of expression which makes it a pleasure to transcribe his words,—"Fear ye not:

* These must be intended by "his army," as distinguished from his "chariots and horsemen." Our last cut, composed from Egyptian sculptures and paintings, shows Egyptian soldiers with the equipments and arms of different corps. The man in the foreground with the round studded shield is, however, not an Egyptian, but belongs to a nation, the soldiers of which are often seen fighting as auxiliaries along with those of Egypt. A native Egyptian soldier, if he has any shield, has it round at the upper end and square at the lower. The charioteer in the background is known to be a king by his head-dress.

† 'Præp. Evang.' lib. x. cap. 27.

stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will show to you this day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day ye shall see no more again for ever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace." They were pacified by this for the present; but there is good reason to suspect that, if measures of relief had long been delayed, they would have given up Moses and Aaron to the Egyptians, and have placed themselves at their disposal. But measures of relief were *not* long delayed. When the night was fully come, the Lord directed Moses to order the people to march forward to the sea; on their arriving at which the prophet lifted up his rod upon the waters, over which instantly blew a powerful east wind, by which they were divided from shore to shore, so that the firm bottom of hard sand appeared; offering a dry road in the midst of the sea, by which they might pass to the eastern shore. At that instant also the pillar of fire which had gone before the Hebrews to guide them on their way was removed to their rear, and, being thus between them and the Egyptians, it gave light to the former in their passage, while it concealed their proceedings and persons from the latter.*

It thus happened that some time passed before the Egyptians discovered that the Israelites were in motion. When they made this discovery, the king determined to follow. It is by no means clear that they knew or thought that they were following them into the bed of the sea. Considering the darkness of the night, except from the light of the pillar, with the confusion of ideas and indistinct perceptions of a people who had not been on the spot long enough to make particular observations, and most of them probably roused from sleep to join in the pursuit, it seems likely that they felt uncertain about the direction, and supposed that they were following some accustomed route by which the Israelites were either endeavouring to escape or to return to Egypt. They may even have thought they were going up the valley of Bedea, although that actually lay in an opposite direction. Anything, however improbable, seems more likely to have occurred to them than that they were passing through the divided sea.

By the time the day broke and the Egyptians became aware of their condition, all the Hebrews had safely reached the other side, and all or nearly all the Egyptians were in the bed of the gulf; the van approaching the eastern shore, and the rear having left the western. The moment of vengeance was come. They found themselves in the midst of the sea, with the waters on their right hand and on their left, and only restrained from overwhelming them by some power they knew not, but which they must have suspected to have been that of the God of the Hebrews. The marine road, ploughed by the multitudes which went before them, became distressing to them; their chariot-wheels dragged heavily along, and very many of them came off from the cars which they supported. The Lord also began to trouble them with a furious warfare of the elements. The Psalmist more than once alludes to this. He exclaims, "The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee, and were afraid:" and then speaks as if every element had spent its fury upon the devoted heads of the Egyptians. The earth shook; the thunders rolled; and most appalling lightnings—the arrows of God—shot along the firmament; while the clouds poured down heavy rains, "hailstones, and coals of fire."† It deserves to be mentioned that this strife is also recorded by the Egyptian chronologer, who reports, "It is said that fire flashed against them in front."

By this time the pursuers were thoroughly alarmed. "Let us flee," said they, "from the face of Israel, for JEHOVAH fighteth for them against the Egyptians." But at that instant the Lord gave the word, Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the restrained waters returned and engulfed them all.([5])

This stupendous event made a profound impression upon the Hebrew mind at large. From that day to the end of the Hebrew polity, it supplied a subject to which the sacred poets and prophets make constant allusions in language the most sublime. Its effect upon the generation

* According to a well-known optical effect, by which we can see by night all that stands between us and the light, but nothing that lies beyond the light. No doubt the pillar gave good light to the Egyptians themselves, but did not enable them to see the Israelites. In like manner the Israelites, doubtless, could not see the Egyptians. A little attention to a matter so perfectly obvious would have spared us some speculations, such as that which gives the pillar a cloudy side and a flaming side, &c.

† Psalm xviii. 13—15; lxxvii. 16, 17.

more immediately concerned was very strong, and, although they were but too prone to forget it, was more abiding and operative than any which had yet been made upon them. When they witnessed all these things, and soon after saw the carcases of those who had so lately been the objects of such intense dread to them, lying by thousands on the beach,—"They feared the Lord, and believed the Lord and his servant Moses."

In the sublime song which Moses composed and sang with the sons of Israel in commemoration of this great event—their marvellous deliverance and the overthrow of their enemies—he, with his usual wisdom, looks forward to important ulterior effects, to secure to the Hebrews the benefit of which may not improbably have formed one of the principal reasons for this remarkable exhibition of the power of Jehovah, and of his determination to protect the chosen race. These anticipations, which were abundantly fulfilled, are contained in the following verses:—

> "The nations shall hear this and tremble:
> Anguish shall seize the inhabitants of Palestine.
> Then shall the princes of Edom be amazed;
> And dismay shall possess the mighty ones of Moab.
> All the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away;
> Fear and terror shall fall upon them:
> Through the greatness of thine arm
> They shall become still as a stone,*
> Until thy people pass over [Jordan], O Jehovah,
> Until thy people pass over whom thou hast redeemed."†

On this occasion the first instance is offered of a custom, learnt most probably in Egypt, and ever retained by the Hebrew women, of celebrating with dances and timbrels every remarkable event of joy or triumph. They were now led by Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron; and they seem to have taken part as a chorus in the song of the men, by answering:—

> "Let us sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously,
> The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea."

As the timbrels of the women were doubtless Egyptian, and the dresses of those of superior rank were probably Egyptian also, we have considered that a similar dance of females, from Egyptian sources, would form a satisfactory illustration.



[Dance of Females with Timbrels.]

* That is, "Shall be petrified."

† Exod. xv. 14—16.

It will appear, from the opinion we have been induced to entertain respecting the place in which the Israelites encamped, and from which they departed, on the western shore of the gulf, that we concur with those who regard Ain Mousa * as the place, on the eastern shore, where they came up from the bed of the sea, and where they witnessed the overthrow of their oppressors. We shall not here add anything to the consideration by which we have in another place † endeavoured to support this conclusion.(6) That the site is thus distinguished in the local traditions of the inhabitants of Sinai, the name alone suffices to indicate; and, although undue weight should not be attached to such traditions, it would be wrong entirely to disregard them when they support or illustrate conclusions otherwise probable. We shall, however, content ourselves with adding, descriptively, that a number of green shrubs, springing from numerous hillocks, mark the landward approach to this place. Here are also a number of neglected palm-trees grown thick and bushy for want of pruning. The springs which here rise out of the ground in various places, and give name to the spot, are soon lost in the sands. The water is of a brackish quality, in consequence, probably, of the springs being so near the sea; but it is, nevertheless, cool and refreshing, and in these waterless deserts affords a desirable resting-place. The view from this place, looking westward, is very beautiful, and most interesting from its association with the wonderful events which it has been our duty to relate. The mountain chains of Attaka, each running into a long promontory, stretch along the shore of Africa; and nearly opposite our station we view the opening—the Pi-ha-hiroth—the "mouth of the ridge," formed by the valley in the mouth of which the Hebrews were encamped before they crossed the sea. On the side where we stand, the access to the shore from the bed of the gulf would have been easy. And it deserves to be mentioned, that not only do the springs bear the name of Moses, but the projecting head-land below them, towards the sea, bears the name of Ras Mousa. Thus do the Cape of Moses and the Cape of Deliverance look towards each other from the opposite shores of the Arabian Gulf, and unite their abiding and unshaken testimony to the judgments and wonders of that day in which the right hand of Jehovah was so abundantly "glorified in might."



[Ain Mousa.]

* The Fountains of Moses.

† 'Pictorial Bible,' note on Exod. xiv. 2.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES.

([1]) The Journey of Moses, p. 161.—The original narrative speaks but of one ass, "set them upon an ass;" but, as it seems preposterous to suppose that there was but one ass for them all, it is likely that, as often happens, the singular is here put for the plural; and that the meaning is, "he set every one of them upon an ass." We do not recollect any modern instance of asses being employed in a journey across this desert, whereas the present is far from being the only ancient instance. In fact, there seem to have been, in very ancient times, greater facilities for travel across this desert than at present. Perhaps it was not so desolate as now; although even now we believe that during the winter and early spring it might be crossed on asses. Then there seem also to have been caravanserais in districts where no one now expects to find such a convenience; and that the way across this and other deserts was comparatively safe appears from numerous instances, such as the journeys of the patriarchs to Egypt, those of Eliezer and Jacob to Mesopotomia, and this of Moses to Egypt from the eastern gulf, with his wife and two children. Indeed, if there were no attendants with this party, it would seem that the wife of Moses returned to Midian with her two sons, unaccompanied by any man. We think it very possible, however, that there may have been attendants, although the Scriptural narrative has no intimation to that effect. However, the absence of any acts of robbery, or of the fear of any such acts, from those who crossed the deserts in all the early Hebrew history, is a remarkable circumstance when we consider the acts of constant violence upon travellers which now take place, and the strong apprehensions with which a journey across any of the Arabian or Syrian deserts is now regarded.

It is not expressly said in the leading narrative that Zipporah returned with her two sons to her father. But, as no notice of her presence is subsequently taken, while we find that her father brought her and her sons to Moses when he was in the Desert of Sinai, this shows that she did leave, and no occasion for her leaving seems so likely as that which the text suggests.

([2]) Worship of the Nile, p. 165.—The Nile seems to have been regarded by the ancient Egyptians very much in the same light as that in which the Ganges is viewed by the Hindoos. It was not only a sacred river, but a god—and not the least of the gods. The Jewish writers believe that the Nile was the chief of the Egyptian gods, and their testimony has not wanted the support of heathen writers. But, if so, we should suppose it was only considered the chief of the terrestrial gods. This is implied indeed in the very context of the passage in which Heliodorus* tells us that the Egyptians paid divine honours to the river, and revered it as the first of their gods; for, he adds, "They declared him to be *the rival* of Heaven, since he watered the earth without the aid of clouds or rain." The principal festival of the Nile was at the summer solstice, when the inundation commenced; at which season, in the dog-days, by a cruel idolatrous rite, the Egyptians sacrificed red-haired persons, principally foreigners, to Typhon, or the power that presided over tempests, at Busiris, Heliopolis, &c., by burning them alive, and scattering their ashes in the air for the good of the people.† Hence Bryant conjectures that these victims may have been chosen from among the Israelites during their stay in Egypt. Perhaps so, if they could find a red-haired man among the Israelites.

As to the qualities of the Nile water, to which there is one allusion in the text, the ancients and the moderns are entirely of one voice on the subject, declaring it to be the most pleasant and nutritive water in the world. Plutarch is puzzled to know why it should be so, but confesses that it was so; from him, also, we learn that the Egyptian priests refrained from giving it to their bull-god, Apis, on account of its fattening properties.

It was also held that this water gave fecundity not only to the soil which was watered by it, but to all living things which partook of it; whence it happened, as we are told, that the Egyptian women produced, frequently, two or three children, and sometimes six, seven, or even eight children at a birth!—which extraordinary *fact* (?) some of the old theologians failed not to adduce when discoursing of the astonishing increase of the Hebrew race in Egypt. It is much more certain that

* 'Ethiop,' lib. ix.

† Plutarch, 'Isis et Osir,' i. 383. This author seems in one place to intimate that the Nile was identified with Osiris.

the water of the Nile was very pleasant and refreshing, whence the anecdote of Pescennius Niger, who, when his soldiers, in Egypt, complained of wanting wine, exclaimed, "What! crave you for wine, when you have the water of the Nile to drink?"

It seems that none who had been accustomed to the Nile water could consider any other tolerable, and that it was highly prized even by foreigners. The following instances are from a note in Savary: "Ptolemy Philadelphus, marrying his daughter Berenice to Antiochus king of Syria, sent her water from the Nile, which alone she could drink (*Athenæus*). The kings of Persia sent for the waters of the Nile, and sal ammoniac (*Dino, Hist. of Persia*). The Egyptians are the only people who preserve the water of the Nile in sealed vases, and drink it when it is old with the same pleasure that we do old wine (*Aristides Rhetor*)."

Of modern testimonies that of Savary himself may suffice:—"The waters of the Nile, also, lighter, softer, and more agreeable to the taste than any I know, greatly influence the health of the inhabitants. All antiquity acknowledges their excellence; and the people, certainly, drink them with a kind of avidity, without being ever injured by the quantity. Being lightly impregnated with nitre, they are only a gentle aperient to those who take them to excess. I will not say, with many writers, that they make women prolific, and give strength and plumpness to the men: the faithful historian ought to stop where the marvellous begins, and relate only what he can warrant." *

(3) EGYPTIAN COUCHES, p. 166.—As the text speaks only of Egyptian couches, we shall confine our attention to them. The finish and good taste displayed by the Egyptians in articles of domestic use—and especially in household furniture—speak strongly of the advance which that people had made, at a very remote period, in the arts of civilization. In our engraving, the central specimen is that which will engage the most attention. The others, usually distinguished as "lion-shaped couches," were those on which the bodies or mummy-cases of the dead were commonly deposited, though not exclusively appropriated to that use. Mr. Wilkinson, speaking with a particular reference to such as that exhibited in our middle specimen, observes:—"Their couches were of wood, with one end raised, and receding in a graceful curve; and the feet, as was often also the case with their chairs, were fashioned to resemble those of some wild animal. But, although the Egyptians had couches, they do not appear to have reclined upon them more frequently than modern Europeans, in whose houses they are equally common; and, indeed, we have authority, both from the sculptures and from sacred history, for believing that the Egyptians, like the *early* Greeks and Romans, were accustomed to sit at meals: for, as Philo justly observes, when Joseph entertained his brethren, he ordered them to *sit* according to their ages, the custom of *reclining* at meals not having yet been introduced.

The couches appear also to have been intended as bedsteads; and it is not impossible that they were used to sleep upon at night, and, in the day-time, a rich covering being substituted for the bedding, they were readily transformed into an ornamental piece of furniture; and the presence of the head-pillow placed upon it, and the steps at the side for ascending it, argue strongly in favour of this supposition; nor is the custom unusual in the East at the present day." 'Ancient Egyptians,' ii. 200, 202.

(4) THE ABOMINATION OF THE EGYPTIANS, p. 167.—We think this may more particularly refer to the cow, which more *generally* than any other animal was reverenced by the Egyptians as the representative of Isis. This animal was never sacrificed by them; but we all know how common a sacrifice the heifer was among the Israelites. Other animals were worshipped in particular districts, such as the sheep and the goat, and the inhabitants of those districts would have been offended to see them sacrificed; but, as an instance in which all Egyptians would have been offended, the cow may be preferably adduced.

(5) THE "BORROWED" JEWELS, p. 172.—Much learning and labour have been bestowed on explanations of this transaction. The most general improvement which has been suggested is, that we should assign the sense of "ask," or "demand," to the word which most versions translate into "borrow;" and the meaning will then be, that the Hebrews availed themselves of the consternation in which they saw the Egyptians, to demand these valuable articles, in compensation for the long service they had rendered. In this explanation one little circumstance is forgotten, which is, the probability that these precious articles were obtained from persons who had never any direct benefit from, or interest in, their services. It seems to us that not so much as is commonly supposed is gained by this alteration. We prefer to adhere to the more re-

* 'Letters on Egypt,' ii. 198.

ceived view of the case; because that seems more in agreement with all the circumstances which surround the transaction. The explanation proceeds on the notion that the Israelites had avowed their intention to escape; for, had it been presumed that they intended to return, it would have been a piece of the grossest and most fatal madness in them to "demand" this valuable property from the Egyptians in a compulsory manner. But their intention to withdraw altogether was never avowed while they were in Egypt. Moses never avowed it. Even when rather closely pressed on the subject, he persisted, at least by implication, that there was no other object than that of holding a feast to Jehovah at the distance of three days' journey into the wilderness, and the ulterior intention was not distinctly avowed by the move which was made from "Etham on the edge of the wilderness." This, therefore, only being the avowed object of the Israelites, it must have seemed perfectly natural to the Egyptians that they should wish to appear as richly attired as possible at the great feast they were about to celebrate; and as natural, that they should borrow such articles as they, in their state of bondage and poverty, did not possess. The consternation they were in at the death of their first-born, and their haste to get the Hebrews away, precluded much deliberation. But by the time the Israelites moved from Etham there had been leisure for reflection, and they manifested their sense that the substance with which they parted on that occasion had only been lent, by the haste which they made to recover it, as soon as they became assured that the Hebrews intended to escape.

([6]) The Destruction of the Egyptians, p. 181.—We have already stated the conclusion of Mr. Wilkinson, that the exode of the Israelites took place in the fourth year of the reign of Thothmes III. But this king reigned thirty-nine years, whereas it is the received opinion that the king at this time reigning was drowned in the Red Sea with all his host. Mr. Wilkinson is not staggered by this; but contends that we have no evidence that the Pharaoh of the scriptural narrative was drowned on that occasion. The point will be best stated in his own words:—

"It is in the fourth year of Thothmes III. that I suppose the exodus of the Israelites to have taken place, and the wars he undertook and the monuments he erected must date subsequently to that event. Indeed there is no authority in the writings of Moses for supposing that Pharaoh was drowned in the Red Sea; and, from our finding that, *wherever a fact is mentioned in the Bible history, we do not discover anything in the monuments that tends to contradict it,* we may conclude that these two authorities will not here be at variance with each other. And in order to show that in this instance the same agreement exists between them, and to prevent a vulgar error, perpetuated by constant repetition, from being brought forward to impugn the accuracy of the Jewish historian,* it is a pleasing duty to examine the account given in the book of Exodus. According to it, Pharaoh led his army in pursuit of the fugitives, and overtook the Israelites encamping by the sea beside Pi-ha-hiroth, before Baal-zephon. The Israelites having entered the channel of the sea, the army of Pharaoh, 'his chariots and horsemen,' pursued them, and all those who went in after them were overwhelmed by the returning waters. This, however, is confined to the chariots and horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; and neither here nor in the song which Moses sang on the occasion of their deliverance, is any mention made of the king's death, an event of *sufficient* consequence at least to have been *noticed,* and one which would not have been omitted. The authority of a psalm can scarcely be opposed to that of Moses, even were the death of Pharaoh positively asserted, but this even cannot be argued from the expression, he 'overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea,' since the death of a monarch is not the necessary consequence of his defeat and overthrow."

After this, Mr. Wilkinson would probably be glad to know that some of the Jewish traditions allege that Pharaoh himself was preserved from the overthrow in the Red Sea, and subsequently extended his power into Assyria. His own further statement concerning Thothmes III. is,—

"The departure of the Israelites enabled Thothmes to continue the war with the northern nations with the greater security and success, and it is not impossible that its less urgent prosecution after the time of Amun-m̄ gori II. was owing partly to the sojourn of the Jews in Egypt. At all events, we find evidence of its being carried on by this monarch with more than usual vigour; and, in consequence of the encouragement given to the arts of peace, the records of his successes, sculptured on the monuments he erected, have been preserved to the present day. He founded numerous build-

* This is a little too strong. If there were any difference, its proper effect would be to throw a doubt over the interpretation of the hieroglyphics in the particular instance, or on the date which has been assigned to the reign of this king, and not to "impugn the accuracy of the Jewish historian."

ings in Upper and Lower Egypt, and in those parts of Ethiopia into which his arms had penetrated; he made extensive additions to the temples at Thebes; and Coptos, Memphis, Heliopolis, and other cities in different parts of the country, benefited by his taste for architectural improvement. In many of the monuments he founded, the style is pure and elegant; but in the reversed capitals of a columnar hall behind the granite sanctuary at Kornak, *he has evinced a love of change* consistent neither with elegance nor utility, leaving *a lasting memorial of his caprice*, the more remarkable as he has elsewhere given proofs of superior taste."

If this be so, verily the character which he has wrought for himself in stone corresponds quite well with that which Moses has given to him.

(7) The Passage of the Red Sea p. 183.— We introduce a note here, not for the purpose of discussing the subject in all its bearings, or even to vindicate or expound the views we have taken, but to state a few particulars which it seems undesirable to overlook.

All the points of the inquiry are included in the three questions,—1. Where the Israelites crossed the Red Sea; 2. By what route they arrived at the place where they encamped; 3. And by what route they were followed by the Egyptians to the same place.

As to the place of the passage over the Red Sea, there are two principal opinions;—one that it was near Suez, and the other that it was at Ain Mousa. There are alternatives which place the passage even higher than Suez and lower than Ain Mousa, but they do not seem to demand much attention. In so far as the question is one of orthodoxy, involving the belief or disbelief of miracles, Ain Mousa is the orthodox alternative, and Suez the sceptical. To cross at Ain Mousa without a great miracle would be impossible, whereas the passage near Suez reduces the miracle just to that size which even a sceptic may receive. Hence not one sceptical writer has placed the passage at Ain Mousa, although some believing writers, in the innocence of their hearts, and not seeing the snare laid for them, have followed those sceptical travellers, French or German, who have placed the passage at Suez. As most of the really able travellers, from Niebuhr downward to near our own time, who have visited this quarter, have been of sceptical dispositions, it does certainly happen that there seems a preponderance of valuable testimony in favour of Suez. But on a close examination the *animus* of this testimony appears, as well as the want of correspondence between this position and those indications of locality which the Scripture narrative offers. As to the *animus*, it is indicated in the manifest wish either to *diminish* the miracle, without giving offence by *denying* it absolutely; or else by the full denial of the miracle, by finding a point where a passage might be made across the end of the gulf without any. To the first class belongs Niebuhr, who is one of those who fix the place of passage near Suez, avowing, as his reason for the preference, "that *the miracle would be less* if they crossed the sea there than near Bedea. But whosoever should suppose that the multitude of the Israelites could be able to cross it here without a *prodigy* would deceive himself, for even in our days no caravan passes that way to go from Cairo to Mount Sinai, although it would shorten the journey considerably.* The passage would have been *naturally* more difficult for the Israelites some thousands of years back, when the gulf was probably longer, deeper, and more extended towards the north; for in all appearance the water had retired, and the ground near this end has been raised by the sands of the surrounding desert.†"

This avowed intention to depreciate the miracle, with the decorous admission that there was a *prodigy* in the matter, and that the passage at this place was more difficult formerly than now, has much of the tone of a superior mind making a difficult concession to vulgar prejudices. For our own part, we do not wish to hear of small miracles, which leave us doubtful whether there be any miracle at all. If we are to have miracles, let them be decidedly miraculous, and let not our veneration for the Divine character be offended by exhibitions of the Almighty as laying bare His holy arm to remove the small remaining difficulty which these theorists leave Him to execute. Even this show of leaving Him something to do, out of respect to his claim of having done all, has been relinquished by less scrupulous writers, as M. du Bois-Aymé, M. Salvador, and others. The statement of the former of these writers has been adopted with some softening by the latter.

If the reader looks at a map of the Red Sea, he will observe that the head of the Gulf of Suez is formed first into a somewhat circular basin by the projection of the opposite capes of Attaka and Mousa, about which point we suppose the Israelites passed. But this basin does not terminate the gulf; for at the northern extremity there is a long and narrow inlet,

* Two leagues, as appears from the account of Bonaparte's attempt to cross at that place.

† 'Voyage en Arabie,' 363.

which has the appearance of a broad river. This inlet is about four miles long, by the average breadth of somewhat more than one mile.* The town of Suez is at its mouth, and the alleged place of passage is placed by some quite near to it, but by others about a mile above. The tides rise between five and six feet. But, although this be the average height to which the tide rises, the waters sometimes rise ten or twelve feet during tempests, when the south wind blows. When the tide is at the lowest, the gravelly beach on each side is left dry to a vast extent, and although the middle, or lowest, part of the bed is never without water, it is then fordable, and in some places may be passed dry-foot. Now the theory is, that Moses, who had long fed his flocks on the borders of the sea, was well acquainted with these facts, and availed himself of them. He led the Israelites across when the tide was low, knowing that the tide would return upon the Egyptians if they ventured to pursue,—although some allow the further benefit of one of those tempests caused by the south wind.

But, in the first place, so opportune a tempest would have been little less than a miracle by itself. According to Moses, there was the agency of a strong *east* wind to clear the passage: according to the theory, no wind was wanting to clear the passage; but a *south* wind would have been very serviceable for the opposite purpose of destroying the Egyptians. However, as it is evident that where the Hebrews crossed the simple collapse of the waters was sufficient to overwhelm the Egyptians, some anecdotes are given us to show that persons may be in danger of drowning even at this place of passage. Among others, there is one of Bonaparte, who, returning one day from the Fountains of Moses, took it into his head to shorten his route some two leagues by riding across at this place instead of going round the head of the inlet. This was at the beginning of the night; and as they were passing the tide rose so very rapidly that no attention was at first paid to it, and Napoleon and his suite were exposed to great danger. Yet all the while they were attended by natives of the neighbourhood for guides.

If this were the place where the Hebrews crossed the sea, there was no apparent need to cross it at all; and, although to a party of travellers it might be a preferable course, it could not be so by any means with so immense and encumbered a party as the Israelites. There was nothing, properly speaking, to compel them. For, so far from being "shut in by the wilderness," or "entangled in the land," or pent up between the mountain and the sea, there was nothing at the point of passage indicated to prevent them from taking almost any other alternative; whereas, at the valley of Bedea, no other alternatives but the passage of the sea or the return to Egypt were open, and there all the conditions apply, not one of which is applicable to Suez. It ought to be enough to say, that the passage of the gulf at that place was *unnecessary*. Besides, it is not likely that the host of Pharaoh would have followed there. If this passage existed at all, it must have been well known to the Egyptians. They could not have entered *unknowingly*, as they might have done at a passage in a new and unexpected situation; and, knowing it, they were far more likely to drive round the head of the gulf, and fall upon the Hebrews on the other side, than, for a trifling advantage, to risk the danger of the returning tide—which danger it is impossible that *they* should not have known. In this place, and, to a body equipped for much more rapid motion than the Hebrews could make, they had less inducement than the Israelites to pass through the sea, while their danger was much greater.

One other point cannot fail to strike us, on a little attention. The travellers and others who contend for the passage near Suez do so on the ground of the facilities which it now offers for such a transit, while, with one voice, they allow that, from conclusive appearances, it is manifest that the sea was wider and deeper at this extremity, and extended farther, than it does at present. But, if that were the case, their argument is lost; for how can they tell what extent of miracle was necessary to enable an army to pass at this place thirty-five centuries ago?—Perhaps as great as at Ain Mousa. But it is not hence to be supposed that, if the passage at Suez was wider and deeper formerly, so may the sea at Ain Mousa have been. If it were necessary we should not object to this conclusion, but the fact is, that the question of diminution only affects the northern extremity at and beyond the inlet, and not the main channel of the stream.

Much of the discussion on this subject was raised by Michaelis, who sent to Niebuhr, then in Egypt, his celebrated queries, one of which proposed to him to inquire on the spot, "Whether there were not some ridges of rock where the water was shallow, so that an army might at particular times pass over? Secondly,

* We have marked off the following measurements on the great map [mile and a half to an inch] in the Atlas to the 'Descript. de l'Egypte.' Length, four miles; breadth, at Suez, three-quarters of a mile; between Suez and the alleged place of passage, one mile and a half; at the alleged place of passage, one mile; *above* that the average breadth is somewhat under a mile.

whether the Etesian winds, which blow strongly all the summer from the north-west, could not blow so violently against the sea as to keep it back in a heap, so that the Israelites might have passed *without a miracle.*"

Niebuhr answered there was no such shoal; and this it is important to know. But then he enters into the question respecting Suez, and the conclusions offered, and the tone of observation adopted, really do very little credit to that most able and upright traveller.

A copy of these questions was also left for Bruce, to join his inquiries; and his spirited and sensible answer does him very great honour.*

"I must confess, however learned the gentlemen were who proposed these doubts, I did not think they merited any attention to solve them. This passage is told us by Scripture to be a *miraculous* one; and, if so, we have nothing to do with *natural* causes. If we do not believe *Moses*, we need not believe the transaction at all, seeing that it is from his authority alone we derive it. If we believe in God, that He *made* the sea, we must believe he could *divide* it when He sees proper reason; and of that He must be the only judge. It is no greater miracle to divide the *Red Sea*, than to divide the river *Jordan*.

"If the Etesian wind, blowing from the north-west in summer, could keep up the sea as a wall on the right, or to the south, of fifty feet high, still the difficulty would remain of building the wall on the left hand, or to the north. Besides, water standing in that position for a day must have lost the nature of fluid. Whence came that cohesion of particles which hindered that wall to escape at the sides? This is as great a miracle as that of *Moses*. If the *Etesian* winds had done this once, they must have repeated it many a time before and since from the same causes. Yet *Diodorus Siculus*, lib. iii. p. 122, says, the Troglodytes, the indigenous inhabitants of that very spot, had a tradition from father to son, from their very earliest ages, *that once this division of the sea did happen there; and that, after leaving its bottom some time dry, the sea* again came back, and covered it with great fury. The words of this author are of the most remarkable kind. We cannot think this heathen is writing in favour of revelation: he knew not *Moses*, nor says a word about *Pharaoh* and his host, but records the miracle of the division of the sea in words nearly as strong as those of *Moses*, from the mouths of unbiassed, undesigning pagans.

"Were all these difficulties surmounted, what could we do with the *pillar of fire?* The answer is, We should not believe it. Why, then, believe the passage at all? We have no authority for the one, but what is for the other. It is altogether contrary to the ordinary nature of things, and, if not a *miracle*, it must be a *fable*." (p. 244-246.)

It is without any surprise, but with sincere regret, that we have seen Professor Robinson take the same view of the question, on the spot, with Niebuhr and others. We were previously prepared to feel assured that he would do so; for being acquainted with the thoroughly German education of his mind, and knowing that he had some years previously published a paper* to prove from Niebuhr, Burckhardt, &c., that the Hebrew host passed the sea near Suez, we anticipated that he would be unable to see anything there likely to disturb his foregone conclusions. For these reasons we withhold from his opinion in this matter that weight which we should be quite disposed to ascribe to it on any other subject.

The question of route *to* the Red Sea is of comparatively small importance. All those who contend for the passage near Suez agree in making the Hebrews come from Egypt, and Pharaoh to pursue them by the same, or nearly the same, route as our own, as far as Adjeroud. But those who place the passage at or near the valley of Bedea, differ as to the route by which they bring them thither. Some take them *through* the valley of Bedea, of which route we have spoken above (p. 180). But that is not the most suitable or usual route towards Sinai, from the quarter in which the land of Goshen appears to have been situated; and we have seen that the pilgrim caravan, although it leaves at a point so much more to the south as Cairo, does not journey by this valley, but nearly by the route which we have supposed the children of Israel to have taken. Father Sicard, a Jesuit missionary, who was intimately acquainted with all the localities, in an able and ingenious article on the subject,† suggests the only hypothesis which can supply a reason for their passing through this valley. He supposes that the "wilderness" in which the Israelites ostensibly sought to hold

* Besides the authorities cited, see Hales's 'Analysis,' i. 389—396; Salvador, 'Institutions du Maïse,' i. 42—48; and the followin Mémoires in 'Descript. de l'Egypte',—Rozière, 'De la Géographie Comparée de la Mer Rouge;' Le Père, 'Mémoire sur le Canal des Deux Mers;' Du Bois-Aymé, 'Notice sur le Séjour des Hébreux in Egypte;' Morison, liv. i. c. 14; Thevenot, 311.

† *Diodorus* indeed attributes this to an "*extraordinary high tide.*" The fact, however, that "*the ground was bare to the very bottom of the gulph,*" is admitted by this curious tradition.

* In the 'American Biblical Repository,' 1832.

† In the 'Mémoires des Missions de la Compagnie de Jesus au Levant,' tom. vi.

their festival, and to which Pharaoh expected them to go, lay between the valley of the Nile and the Gulf of Suez, the approach to which lay *in* this valley of Bedea. It was, therefore, expected that, after proceeding the requisite distance in this valley, they would turn southward into the deserts, which are at this day named the deserts of St. Anthony or of the Thebaid; and that it was when, instead of making this turn into the desert, the Hebrews went straight on through the valley to the Red Sea, that the Egyptians became convinced that they intended to escape. This is an exceedingly good explanation, and if we were to change the view we have taken, it would be to adopt this. Even in that case, however, we should differ from him in making Pharaoh pursue through the same valley. We observe, with surprise, that even those who bring the Israelites to the mouth of the valley of Bedea by the route which we have followed, make Pharaoh come upon them *through* that valley from the banks of the Nile; but this, under all the circumstances, would have been, as we have already explained (p. 180), a sort of infatuation into which he was not likely to fall.

CHAPTER IV.

SINAI.



[A Valley in Sinai.]

The Israelites, now relieved from all fear of the Egyptians, probably made some considerable stay at Ain Mousa. The district was then regarded as " the wilderness of Shur," a name of wide extent, a clear trace of which is still exhibited in the present name of Sdur.

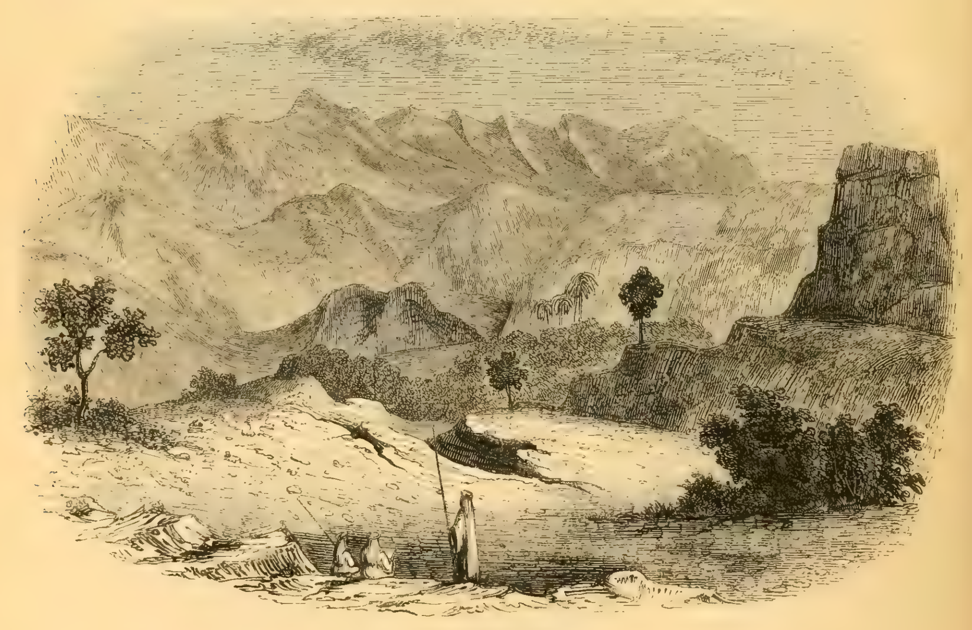
When they departed, their road lay over a desert region, sandy, gravelly, and stony, alternately. On their right hand their eyes rested on the deep blue(1) waters of the gulf so lately sundered for their sake; while on their left hand the mountain-chain of El Ruhat, stretching away to a greater distance from the shore as the pilgrims advanced. In about nine miles they entered a boundless desert plain, called El Ati, white and painfully glaring to the eye. Proceeding beyond this, the ground became hilly, with sand-hills near the coast. In all this way, which it took them three days to traverse, they found no water; but then at last they came to a well, the waters of which were so bitter, that it bore the name of Marah [*Bitterness*]. That name, in the form of *Amarah*, is now borne by the barren bed of a winter torrent a little beyond which is still found a well, bearing the name of Howara, whose bitter waters answer to this description. Camels will drink it; but even the thirsty Arabs never drink of it themselves; and it is the only water on the shore of the Red Sea which they cannot drink. This, when first taken into the mouth, seems insipid rather than bitter; but when held in the mouth a few seconds it becomes extremely nauseous. This well rises within an elevated mound surrounded by sand-hills, and two small date-trees grow near it.*

* Lord Lindsay, ii 263.

The Hebrews, unaccustomed as yet to the hardships of the desert, and having been in the habit of drinking their fill of the best water in the world, were much distressed by the scarcity of water in the region in which they now wandered, and they were disappointed of the relief they expected from this well; they murmured greatly against Moses for having brought them into such a dry wilderness, and asked him, "What shall we drink?" On this Moses cried to JEHOVAH, who indicated to him an unknown tree([2]), on throwing the branches of which into the well, the waters became sweet and fit for use.

Departing from thence, they soon found the country become more mountainous and picturesque; and when they arrived at Elim, the cheerful presence of twelve wells of water and seventy palm-trees engaged them to encamp. This spot is, with sufficient probability, supposed to be the same as that which now bears the name of Wady Gharendel, which is the largest of all the torrent beds on the western side of the peninsula. It is about a mile broad, and extends away indefinitely to the north-east. This pleasant valley abounds in date-trees, tamarisks, acacia, and the shrub *ghurkud*;* but the springs are too distant from the common route to be visited by travellers.

Soon after the Hebrew host left Elim, they entered the "wilderness of Sinai, which is between Elim and Sinai," which we interpret to signify the rocky desert—yet not without pleasant valleys here and there—which extends from below Wady Gharendel to the borders of the Upper Sinai, or, more precisely, to the neighbourhood of Wady Feiran and Mount Serbal.† By this time a month had passed since they left Egypt, and the provisions on which they had hitherto subsisted began to run short. On this, as usual, they murmured against their leaders, in such a style, that we can scarcely help regarding them as being, at that time, a body of the most gross and gluttonous slaves with which history makes us acquainted. "Would to God," cried they, "we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger." Exod. xvi. 3.



[Wady Gharendel.]

* *Peganum retusum.*—Forskal.

† Wady Mokatteb, of which a representation has been given (p. liv.), is one of the valleys of this district, and through it the most common route lies.

It may seem strange that a people who possessed flocks and herds in abundance should utter such a complaint. But it is true that there are, at this day, few people who eat less animal food than the pastoral tribes of Western Asia; and to them the slaughter of a productive animal seems an act of extravagance almost culpable, unless performed to furnish an entertainment for friends or strangers. The animal food which the Israelites had eaten in Egypt was derived from the Egyptians, not from their own flocks and herds: merely as a pastoral people they would not have felt the want of flesh-meat; but, having now been accustomed to it in the service of the Egyptians, they felt an inclination for it,—but not at the expense of their own flocks and herds. In short, it may be well to understand that meat is upon the whole regarded as a luxury, rather than as a usual article of food, among the pastoral tribes, and even, although in a less degree, among the settled communities of Western Asia. The want of corn formed a fairer subject of complaint; for some kind of grain is necessary even to a Bedouin, and must have seemed particularly necessary to those who had all their lives eaten bread to the full in the country where corn was the most abundantly produced.

The reply to their complaint was, that they should that very evening have meat to eat, and in the morning bread to the full. But they were reminded that the miraculous gratification of their wants by the power of JEHOVAH might also evince that He had heard their murmurings, which, although immediately levelled at Moses and Aaron, were in reality murmurings against him, and implied distrust of his power and his care. To confirm this, they were directed to look towards the wilderness, where they beheld the effulgence or glory by which he *manifested* his presence, beaming forth from the cloud which went before them and rested with them. It proved, however, that the meat—the luxury—and which they had other means of obtaining—was supplied only this time and once again the next year; whereas bread, or rather a substitute for it, which they could not otherwise have obtained, was supplied to them constantly from that time forward.

Poultry and feathered game have in all ages been favourite articles of food in Egypt. The Egyptians were expert fowlers, and had the art of salting for future use some of those birds of passage which are plentiful at one time of the year, and not at all seen in the other part. Among these birds quails were not the least esteemed. They are plentiful in Egypt from about the middle of autumn to the beginning of summer, when, that and the adjoining countries becoming too hot for them, while the more northern countries have ceased to be too cold, they take wing, and proceed to the north, or north-west, or east, their immediate course being much determined by the direction of the wind, which at the time of their flight in the late spring blows generally from the south.

Now God, at the time fixed by himself, supplied the Hebrews with food—the food they desired—through such a flight of quails. He gave the wind which directed the course of an enormous flight of these birds over the camp of the Israelites, where, wearied with their flight across the Red Sea, they flew so heavily and low,* that it was easy for the people to capture immense numbers of them. Thus were they, for the time, abundantly supplied with the sort of food they had been taught to value in Egypt; and the arrival, exactly at their camp, of this immense flock of quails, might have sufficed to convince even their obduracy that they were indeed the special objects of care to an Almighty protector and guide.

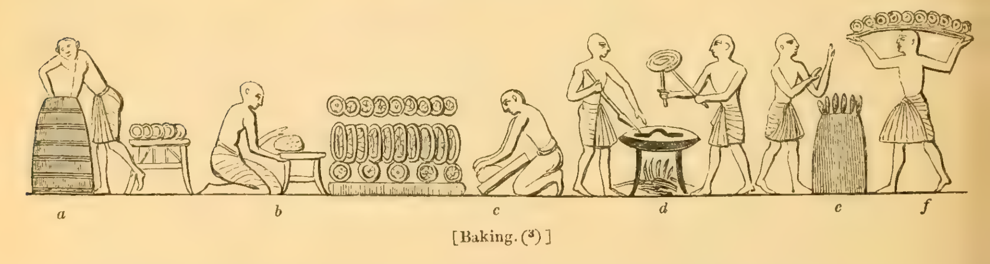
But this was not all; for the next morning there was a fall of dew around the camp; and, when the dew had dried up, the ground was found to be covered with a small and shining substance, small as the particles of hoar-frost, and in shape like coriander-seed. The Hebrews, who had never before beheld such a substance, asked one another, "What is it?" [MAN-HU?] from which question it took the name of MANNA. Moses answered their question by telling them that this was the provision of bread which the Lord had promised, and of which every man

* They always fly low, and under such circumstances much lower than usual. The facility with which quails may be captured after being thus fatigued was well known to the ancients, and several anecdotes on the subject have been preserved. One is, that of the exiles whom King Actisanes banished to Rhinoculura, where they were like to have been starved if they had not bethought them of making long nets of slit reeds, and placing them several stades along the shore, whereby they were enabled to catch the quails which came flying over the sea in large flocks, and thus secured for themselves an ample stock of provisions. Diod. Sic. i. 5.

was directed to take the quantity of a homer * for each member of his family. They did so. Some gathered more and some less; but, as the whole was afterwards measured out at the rate of a homer to each person, " he who gathered much had nothing over, and he who gathered little had no lack."† They were then fully instructed in the nature and use of this marvellous food. They were told, indeed they saw, that all of which remained ungathered dissolved in the heat of the sun and was lost. They were also informed that the quantity collected was only intended for the food of the current day, and that if any of it were kept till the next morning it would corrupt and breed worms. Notwithstanding this, some of the people did, out of curiosity or precaution, save some of it, which in the morning was found to be in a condition so stinking and full of worms as to be entirely unfit for use. And yet it was directed that a double quantity should be gathered on the sixth day; for the seventh day was henceforth to be observed by the Israelites as a day of rest from all labour, and on that day no fresh manna would be supplied. That day they were to live on the surplus quantity which they collected the day before; and it proved that the quantity thus kept for the sabbath



[Pounding in a Mortar.]



[Baking. (3)]

remained sweet and wholesome, notwithstanding that it corrupted if kept more than one day under ordinary circumstances. In preparing this matter for use, they found that they could deal with it much as with grain. They ground it in their hand-mills, or pounded it in

* About five and one-tenth pints.

† We know not how some persons have magnified this into a separate miracle; for it seems quite evident, from the text, that the equal distribution was the result of measurement. As we believe this supply of food to have been miraculous in the strongest and fullest sense, we feel all the more free in rejecting the unnecessary miracles which some interpreters are constantly finding in the most ordinary matters. We believe that there is no clear instance in which God exercised extraordinary powers to effect results which might be produced by the powers of nature, or by ordinary circumstances or measures of conduct.

mortars, kneaded it into dough, and baked it *in* one kind of pan-oven, or *upon* one of another kind, according to the processes of preparing bread, which, as appears from our engravings, were used in Ancient Egypt, and are still preserved in the East. It was thus made into cakes, which is the form usually given to Oriental bread; and these cakes were found to taste like the finest bread made with honey, or, as described in another place, with oil.*


[Kneading.]

Such was the substance, and thus was it supplied, which formed "the staff of life" to the vast Hebrew host through all their long stay in the wilderness.(4)

From the station in the wilderness of Sin which these transactions made so memorable, the Israelites continued their journey over a sandy and stony region, intersected by the beds of numerous torrents, which are perfectly dry, except in the season of rain, when some of them are of very considerable depth.† Except at that season water is scarce; and by the usual and nearest route, which is generally supposed to be that which was taken by the Israelites, occurs only at two places before reaching Wady Feiran. These places we incline to think were the stations Dophkah and Alush, at which we are told the host rested between the Desert of Sin and Rephidim.‡ The first of these is at Wady Naszeb, where the neighbourhood of a well of good water, combined with the shelter of a large impending rock,§ makes the most favourite resting-place which this wild region offers. The other may have been at Wady Boodra, where there is a spring of good water, which, being somewhat aside from the common road and often choked with sand, has escaped the notice of most travellers.||

The next rest of the Israelites was at Rephidim, where no water could be found. The determination of this station and of the two preceding is connected with an inquiry concerning the true situation of Mount Sinai, from which they received the law, and before which they remained so long encamped; for Rephidim was the last resting-place before reaching the base of that mountain.

The more diligently we compare the accounts of Scripture with the statements of travellers, the more entirely we are convinced that the mountains now pointed out as Horeb and Sinai could not possibly be the scene of the transactions which the Hebrew history records. How these high interior mountains, surrounded by narrow ravines and valleys, in which it is impossible that the host of Israel could have remained encamped with the room and comfort which they manifestly enjoyed, is not a question which requires consideration in this place. But it is probable that, when attention began to be strongly directed towards Sinai, during the first fervour of the spirit for pilgrimages, and when it was determined to build a convent in this place, the present spot was deemed the most eligible for the establishment, and that therefore the monks successfully endeavoured to direct attention to it as the sacred locality. In this they were no doubt powerfully aided by the discovery of the pretended remains of St. Catherine upon the summit of the mountain which has since borne her name. It is to her honour that the convent is dedicated. However this be, more than one of our more inquiring travellers (5) have been struck by the unsuitableness of the alleged Sinai to be the scene of the circum-

* Compare the accounts of this manna given in Exod. xvi. 14, 23, and Num. xi. 7-9.

† There is Wady Taibe, for instance, the depth of which is said to be in winter equal to the height of two men.

‡ Num. xxxiii. 12, 13. The list of names in this chapter contains many stations omitted in Exodus.

§ This rock—"the Rock of the Pilgrims"—has been already represented in this work (p. xlvi). The rock seems for ages to have afforded a shelter to pilgrims and travellers. "Shady spots like this," says Burckhardt, "are well known to the Arabs; and, as the scanty foliage of the acacia, the only tree in which these valleys abound, affords no shade, they take advantage of such rocks, and regulate their journey in such a way as to be able to reach them at noon, there to take their siesta." The reader conversant with the Scripture will remember the satisfaction with which the "shadow of a great rock in a desert land" is mentioned. Isa. xxxii. 2.

|| "We walked on some distance to a well, which we found full of sand. Hussein scooped it out with his hands, and the water rose: all of us drank. I never tasted anything so delicious, always excepted the water of the Nile, to which no other beverage is comparable; but then I was very thirsty, for the day was by far the hottest I had yet travelled on......What a blessing water is! None can appreciate it who has not thirsted in the desert." Lord Lindsay, i. 273.

stances we shall presently relate. In this belief we have sought for a mountain in this region which might be open to none of the objections to which the other is liable. We think that we have found this in the Mount Serbal which has been described and represented in a preceding page (lii—liv).

The grandeur of this mountain is not exceeded by that of any other in Sinai; indeed, its grandeur is, in appearance, the greatest, seeing that it raises its equal height from lower ground, in more distinctness and fulness of separate form, and in majesty more single and apart, while around it, instead of narrow ravines, it overlooks broad and rich valleys and ample plains, in which even so immense a host as that of Israel might remain conveniently encamped with all their flocks and herds. And besides this, such are the manifest tokens in the caves which have been formed, and in the inscriptions with which its sides are charged, that Mount Serbal was in ancient times regarded as a holy mountain; that even Burckhardt allows that this was probably considered the "Mount of God," *before* that distinction was applied to the mountain which now bears it, and which *he* thinks is justly entitled to it. We recommend the subject to the more particular inquiries of those who feel any interest in it; and, meanwhile, we shall probably be thought entitled to assume the probability we have wished to establish.

But if Mount Serbal was the Sinai, then the station Rephidim, where the host of Israel thirsted before they came to Sinai, must also have been before Mount Serbal; and then, reflectively, if Rephidim was before Mount Serbal, the greater is the probability that Mount Serbal is Sinai. But Rephidim was certainly not at the place where it is now fixed, which is in about the most impossible situation that can be conceived, and where no one in his senses would have dreamed of looking for it, unless the monks of St. Catherine's convent had found it convenient so near at hand. It is high up the central cluster of mountains in the ravine or very narrow valley, El Erbayn,* which separates the summits of St. Catherine and the so-called Sinai. As there is not one circumstance of probability or of congruity with the sacred narrative in this position, we shall waste no words to disprove it, but content ourselves with intimating that there is no part of this central region in which a miracle to produce water would not have been grossly superfluous, so abundant are the natural springs. Seeing, therefore, that Rephidim could not be here, that no man need feel thirst after he has entered or passed the beautiful and well-watered valley of Feiran,† *which extends before and leads to Mount Serbal*, we have concluded that Rephidim must have been at some point before that valley was reached.

In this place the people, unmindful, in the agonies of their thirst, of the experienced mercies of God, began to murmur so loudly against Moses and Aaron, that unless immediate relief were afforded it seemed likely that they would be stoned by the now fierce multitude. Moses cried to God, who told him to take the elders of the people on with him as witnesses, and smite with his rod a rock in Horeb, from which streams of water should then miraculously flow to give drink to the people. This was done; and to commemorate the transaction Moses imposed on the place the names of Massa [*Temptation*] and Meribah [*Contention*].‡

We have not hitherto heard of the inhabitants of the Sinai peninsula, or understood how they were affected by the recent transactions, or with what feelings they regarded the advance of the vast Hebrew host into the finest part of the country. We now hear of them.

It appears that not only the peninsula, but the adjoining deserts towards the south of Palestine, were in the occupation of an extensive and powerful tribe, of Bedouin or semi-Bedouin habits, called Amalekites. The fine valley of Feiran was then, doubtless, as now, the principal seat of those who occupied the peninsula; and, indeed, the Arabian historians preserve the tradition that the valley contained ancient settlements and towns of the Amalekites. There are some ruins of an old city, which they say was *F*aran or *P*aran, and that it was

* Noticed at p. l of the Physical History. Here they show the rock struck by Moses, of which a representation has been given in p. lviii.

† Which name is undoubtedly the same as Paran, a name which Scripture applies to Mount Sinai. Now this valley, still bearing this name, extends in front of Serbal. Lord Lindsay has a fine description of this valley, i. 275-281.

‡ "Because of the contention of the Israelites, and because they tempted the Lord, saying, Is the Lord among us or not?"—Exod. xvii. 7.

founded by, and belonged to, the Amalekites; and they affirm that the numerous excavations in the mountains near, were the sepulchres of that people.*



[Wady Feiran.]

These Amalekites determined to resist the further progress of the Israelites, who had now, as we have supposed, reached the very borders of their chief settlements in Wady Feiran. Their knowledge of the wealth with which the Hebrews were at this time laden—the spoils of Egypt,—probably tended the more to excite and strengthen this resolve. That they should venture to assail such an immense body as that of the Hebrews may, at first, seem strange; but we are to consider that they probably looked upon them as a confused body of spiritless slaves—as, in fact, they were,—debilitated, morally at least, by their long bondage in Egypt; and they had doubtless military experience enough to know that the numbers of a host composed like this, and encumbered with women and children, flocks and herds, did not render them the more formidable.

When the hostile intentions of the Amalekites were discovered, Moses, well acquainted with the courage and discretion of his personal follower, JOSHUA, whose name now occurs for the first time, resolved to confide to him the conduct of this first military action. He was directed to form a chosen body from the whole host, and with them give battle to the Amalekites the next morning. When that morning broke, Joshua advanced against the enemy, while Moses ascended a hill with Aaron and Hur, that he might view the battle, and pray to the Lord for success in this first essay of arms. He lifted his hands in prayer as the armies met, and Amalek was unable to withstand the force of the Hebrew onset. Moses ceased his prayer, and Amalek prevailed; but when the prophet again lifted up his faithful and clean hands, Joshua was again the stronger. Seeing this, he determined to continue in prayer; but, when weariness overcame him, Aaron and Hur brought him a stone on which he sat, while they sustained his uplifted arms until the setting of the sun, by which time the Amalekites were completely routed. It was thus that God convinced the Hebrews that the glory of this victory was due to Him, and not themselves—to his favour, and not their strength.

Bitter was the doom pronounced from Heaven upon the Amalekites, for this first act of hostility against the chosen people, in their most weak and unorganised condition. And to

* Makrizi in Burckhardt, p. 617.

understand it clearly, we should recollect that this act was one of defiance against the Power by which they were protected: for the Amalekites had seen before their very eyes the wonders which the Lord had wrought for this people in the Red Sea and in the desert; and the aggression was, therefore, in every way stronger than that of any people with whom, in after days, the Hebrews were engaged in warfare. They lifted up their swords against the Israelites, in the very presence, as it were, of that mighty Protector, the mere report of whose deeds struck terror into the hearts of nations, later in time and remoter in place, who had only heard of those things by "the hearing of the ear." For this their doom was abiding enmity and ultimate extirpation; and very noticeable are the terms in which it is expressed—showing the superior importance which was now attached to written testimonials: "*Write this for a memorial in a book*, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua, that I will utterly put out the remnant of Amalek from under heaven." To impress it upon the people that their deliverance was due to God, Moses erected an altar, at which their thanks might be publicly acknowledged, and the memory of their deliverance perpetuated: and the name which he imposed upon it, JEHOVAH-NISSI [JEHOVAH IS MY BANNER],* made it a memorial of their obligation to extirpate Amalek.



[Bedouin Encampment in a Valley of Sinai.†]

This victory enabled the Hebrew host to advance, and encamp in peace in the wilderness at the foot of "the great mountain," which they did on the first day of the third month from their leaving Egypt.

This was the point of their immediate destination: in this place they were to behold the glory of their God, veiled in clouds,—to hear His voice amid the thunder,—to see His glances in the lightning,—and to feel the power of His right arm when it shook the mountains (6).

No sooner had they arrived at this place than the operation for which they were brought

* "Because this shall be known as my banner of the war which JEHOVAH will have with Amalek, from generation to generation."—Exod. xvii. 16.

† The valley is Wady Sheikh.

there, of forming them into a peculiar nation, commenced. The first measure was to obtain from the Israelites a distinct and formal recognition of the supreme authority of Jehovah, and the promise of implicit obedience to it. Moses, who had gone up into the mountain, returned to the Israelites, with instructions to say to them, in the name of God, " Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I have borne you as on eagle's wings, and brought you hither unto myself. Now, therefore, if ye will indeed obey my voice, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be to me a peculiar treasure above all people. For though the whole earth be mine, yet ye shall be to me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation."* As they were unacquainted with any other priests than those of Egypt, the words in the last sentence probably conveyed to them the impression that from among the nations of the earth it was proposed to set them apart to his peculiar service and honour, in like manner as the hierarchy of Egypt was set apart as a distinct and honoured caste from among the Egyptian people.

The cheerful and ready answer of the people to Moses, " All that JEHOVAH hath spoken we will do," was gladly reported by him to the Lord, who then answered that on the third following day He would appear in glory upon the mountain, in the sight of all the people, to deliver in person the laws to which he required obedience. Against that time the people were to purify themselves, and wash their clothes, that they might appear worthily before their King. Moses bore this intelligence to the people, and it was arranged that they should on that day come forth from the camp, and stand, in an orderly manner, around the base of the mountain; and barriers were set up lest any rash persons should break through to look upon JEHOVAH, and so perish.

The eventful day arrived, being the fifth day of that month, and the fiftieth after the departure from Egypt. The morning was ushered in with terrible thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud rested upon the mountain-top. There was heard a sound like that of a trumpet, but so exceedingly loud that the people trembled greatly. They were then drawn out, and stood around the mountain, " to meet with God." They found the mountain wholly enveloped in fire, and smoke, and thick darkness; for God had descended in fire upon the mountain, which quaked beneath his feet. No figure or similitude appeared, but a VOICE was heard from amidst the thick clouds, giving utterance to the words which form the Decalogue. So awful and tremendous was the scene, that all the people, and even Moses himself,† feared exceedingly and trembled—the more especially when they heard that Voice which they had not deemed that mortal man could hear and still live. They drew back from the mountain, and entreated Moses that they might no more hear what they had heard, or see such things as they had seen; and desired that he would himself draw nigh, and hear what else JEHOVAH, their God, might say, and report it to them, and they would be obedient,—" But let not God speak to us, lest we die." They then retired still further from the mountain, and Moses advanced to the thick darkness where God was. Then the Lord said to him, " I have heard the voice of the words of this people which they have spoken unto thee: they have well said in all that they have spoken. *O that there were such a heart in them that they would fear Me, and keep my commandments always, that it may be well with them, and with their children for ever!* For I will raise them up a Prophet like unto thee, and will put my words into his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him: and it shall come to pass that whosoever will not hearken to my words, which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him." After he had heard these tender expressions, which so strongly exhibit God in his paternal character, and this promise, which is replete with significance to those who believe that Jesus Christ is the " Prophet " therein foretold, Moses returned to the people to dismiss them to their tents; after which, as required, he returned to the mountain, to receive from the Lord the fundamental laws and institutions by which the chosen people were in future to be governed; and which will, presently, receive from us such attention as our limits will allow us to bestow.

* Exod. xix. 4-6.

† It may be important for some persons to note that neither Moses and Aaron, nor any other persons, were present upon the mountain from which the Voice spoke. Moses did go up in the first instance, but was sent down again to the people, and was with them when the Decalogue was delivered.

On this first occasion Moses received a number of civil laws; and as they referred chiefly to the settled life which the Israelites as yet had only in prospect, the promise of the heritage in Canaan was renewed, with the intimation that no sudden expulsion of the present inhabitants of that land was within the Divine intention; but that they would be expelled by degrees, in proportion as the increasing population of the Hebrews might enable them to occupy the lands vacated by the Canaanites.

Moses returned to the camp to make this communication to the people. They promised obedience to the laws, which he then communicated to them. Then Moses *wrote down* all the words which the Lord had spoken; and, the next morning early, proceeded to build an altar at the foot of the mountain, and to set up twelve stones, corresponding to the number of the tribes. After sacrifices had been offered upon the altar, Moses took the book in which he had written down laws and promises which had already been received, and read them aloud to the people; and when they had again declared their formal assent to the terms of this covenant, he took the blood of the sacrifices, and sprinkled it over them, saying, "Behold the blood of the covenant which Jehovah has made with you concerning all these things."

After this, Moses, as he had been directed, ascended again into the mountain, attended by Joshua, and accompanied by Aaron, Nadab and Abihu (two of his sons), and seventy of the elders of Israel. They entered not into the thick cloud; but, although they paused far below it, they were allowed to obtain a glimpse of that glory of the God of Israel which the cloud concealed. That which they beheld was but—speaking after the manner of men—the place of His feet, but it appeared "a pavement of sapphire, like the body of the heavens for brightness."

They ate together, there upon the mountain, on the meat of the peace-offerings which they had lately sacrificed, and on which the people were feasting in the plain below.

Moses was then called up into the clouded summit of the mountain. Before he went he desired those who had come with him to remain there until his return, and then proceeded, with Joshua, into the cloud. To the people in the plain, the higher part of the mountain seems at this time to have exhibited the appearance of being invested by a thick and dark cloud, while from the very top arose a large body of "devouring fire."* For six days Moses and Joshua remained under the cloud; but on the seventh day Moses was called to the very top, to which he went, leaving Joshua, probably, below. He there received instructions for the establishment of a priesthood, and the construction of a tabernacle, with laws concerning the Sabbath, and some other matters; and, in the end, he received two tablets of stone, on which God had written the words of those ten principal laws which he had previously proclaimed in the hearing of all the people.

Moses remained in the mountain forty † days, during which he was divinely sustained, so as to feel no need of food. This long stay was probably unexpected by himself, and certainly was so by the friends he had left below, who, after some stay, how long we know not, grew tired of waiting longer, and returned to the camp. As the time passed, and nothing further was heard of Moses, the people became anxious and alarmed, and at last concluded that he had perished in that "devouring fire" that shone upon the mountain-top. Having, as they deemed, lost the leader, in whom they appear to have had as much confidence as they were capable of giving, they seem to have conceived that they were at liberty to construct their religious and civil system according to their own fancies; or, perhaps, surrounded, as their course was, by difficulties which they had not energy to meet, they contemplated a return to Egypt,‡ calculating, perhaps, that a voluntary return, together with the death of their

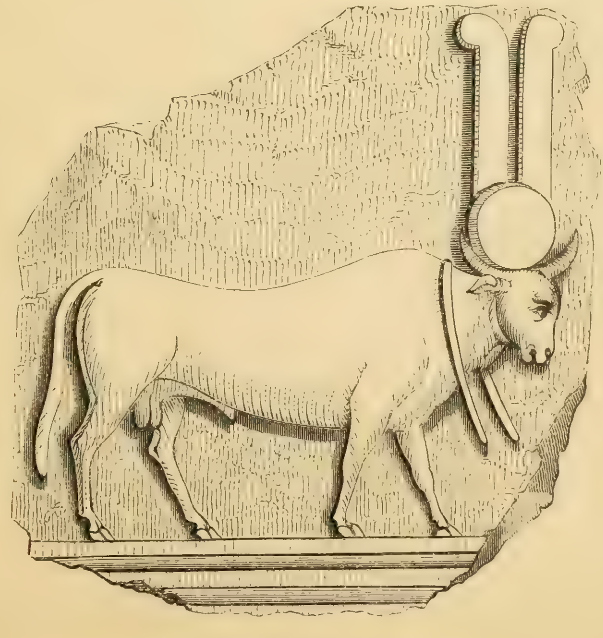
* That is, fire in action, flaming, raging.

† The Hebrews often use a determinate number to express an indeterminate one. "Forty," in particular, is much used to express "many," without any intention to say, precisely, how many. Whether the word is used in its determinate or indeterminate sense in this instance, we, of course, do not know.

‡ This seems to be intimated by Stephen (Acts vii. 39, et seq.), and appears highly probable in itself. The Jewish writers attribute the whole of this last affair to the influence and the representations of the Egyptian vagabonds—"the mixed multitude"—who went up with the Israelites. This may have had something to do with it; but there is so little to exonerate Aaron and the people for their several shares in the transaction, that Josephus, always jealous for the honour of his nation, omits all notice of it.

deliverer, would procure them a favourable reception in that country. The first act which occurred to them would have seemed a very suitable preparation for such a movement; at any rate, it exhibited strongly the Egyptian tendencies of their minds—the effects of that influence which, whether for good or (as in this instance) for evil, a civilised and accomplished people must always exercise upon any less accomplished and civilised people with whom they are, or have been, in contact. To appreciate this influence properly, in the case of the Hebrews, is to obtain the key to much which might otherwise seem obscure in the early *national* history of that people.

The Israelites had but lately heard God, from amid the lightnings, forbid that any image should be made for worship; and although that Voice, which "shook the heavens," had filled their souls with dread, and might still seem to ring in their ears, they now applied tumultuously to Aaron, saying, "Up, make us *a god* to go before us; for as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we know not what is become of him." Perhaps these expressions were not intended to be disrespectful to Moses, though from the difference of the Hebrew idiom they may seem so to us. At all events, in applying to Aaron (*who had not yet, that they knew, been appointed to the priesthood*) they recognised the authority which Moses had delegated, during his own absence, to him and to Hur. It is not by any means to be understood that the demand which they made, conveyed a rejection of JEHOVAH, the God of their fathers, whose wonders they had so lately witnessed, and by whose bounty they were still fed from day to day. It appears very evident from all that passed, that what they wanted was a symbolical representation of him, after the Egyptian fashion,—a consecrated image to which they might render worship. Their minds were too gross to take in the idea of God apart from an image which might seem to embody and concentrate his presence. Even the sensible manifestations of his presence which JEHOVAH had afforded, and which was indeed still before their eyes, was not sufficient for them. They must have a representative image; but this God had strictly forbidden, knowing how easily the toleration of any image might lead them into the worship of other gods. All this was well known to Aaron: yet, wanting the moral courage of his brother, and fearing, perhaps, that a refusal from him might lead them to transfer to another that authority which they were at present



[Apis.—The Golden Calf.]

disposed to recognise in him, he had the culpable weakness to comply with their desires. But he required that they should contribute the ear-pendants of the women and children,* possibly calculating that the reluctance of the women to part with these ornaments might occasion delay or difficulty; but, if so, he was mistaken. The ear-pendants were promptly collected, and given to him. He gave them to the founders (Egyptians, probably), who very quickly transformed them into a golden image, bearing the familiar figure of a calf—or rather a young bull,—no doubt in imitation of the Egyptian Apis, without the example of which this was not the representative symbol of the Deity which they were the most likely to have found. In setting up this idol, Aaron was careful to keep it in the minds of the people that it was but a symbolical figure of the true God. He recognised it with the words, "This is thy God, O Israel! that brought thee out of the land of Egypt," and proceeded to proclaim a feast to JEHOVAH for the next day. On that day a large majority of the people concurred in offering burnt-offerings † and peace-offerings ‡ before the "golden calf," upon the altar which Aaron had caused to be made; and after the unhallowed sacrifice, they rose up for singing and dancing, and wanton play, according to the practice of the Egyptians in some of the services of Apis, or rather of Osiris, whom the bull Apis represented.

At that very time Moses, still in the mount, was commanded to descend to the people, in language which made their sin and the Divine indignation known to him. He hastened down, and in his descent was joined by the faithful Joshua, who had waited patiently for him. As they went down together, the noise from the camp reached their ears; and Joshua, whose ideas were of a military character, supposed it the sound of war. But Moses answered, "It is not the shouting for victory, nor the howling for defeat, but mirthful songs that I hear."

When they came near enough to notice the calf and the dancing before it, the anger of Moses was so excited, that he threw from his hands the tablets of stone which he had received from God, and brake them in pieces beneath the mountain, intending, probably, thereby to intimate that, in like manner, the recent covenant between God and them was broken on their part, and, in consequence, rescinded on His. Then he advanced to the golden calf, which they had made, "and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strewed it upon the water, and made the Israelites drink of it,"—thus adding disgust to ignominy; for gold thus treated is of a most abominable taste (7).

After thus destroying the idol he proceeded to the punishment of the idolaters themselves. He stood at one of the entrances to the camp and cried, "Who is on JEHOVAH's side? Haste to me!" and in answer, all the men of his own tribe—that of Levi—gathered around him. These he ordered to go from one end of the camp to the other, sword in hand, and slay every one who persisted in his idolatry, without favour or affection either to their neighbour or their brother. They obeyed him; and 3000 men fell that day by their hands. Nor was this all; for the Lord sent plagues among the people, to punish them further for this great offence.

It was on this occasion that Moses was enabled to manifest his love for his people by his urgent intercessions with the Lord on their behalf; as well as the noble disinterestedness of his own character, by his refusal of the tempting offer from God to adopt his family in their room, and to "make of him a great nation." He prayed that the Almighty would "blot him out of his book,"§ or take his life away, unless He would forgive "the great sin of his people." In the end he prevailed with God, not only to receive them again into his favour, but to rescind the intention which had been intimated of withdrawing His own presence from them, and of sending an inferior angel to conduct them to the land of promise, and to drive out the Canaanites before them. It is but just to add that the intimation of this last purpose threw the Israelites into the utmost grief and consternation; and they remained, as mourners,

* It does not appear that the men wore ear-rings; neither did the men among the Egyptians, although this ornament was common enough among various semi-civilised and barbarous nations of Asia and Africa.

† "*Burnt-offerings*,"—Offerings entirely consumed upon the altar.

‡ "*Peace-offerings*."—Offerings in which certain parts only were consumed on the altar, the rest being eaten by the offerers.

§ One of several allusions in the Scriptures to the register-books, in which the names of all the living were entered by the scribes, and scored off at their death. Metaphorically, God is supposed to have such a book—the book of the living,—and to be blotted out from it is to have the life taken away.

without their ornaments, until it was recalled. During the same time also Moses removed his own tent out of their polluted camp ; and only from time to time went thither to make known the commands of God.

When the Lord had pardoned his people and received them again into his favour, He commanded Moses to hew two tablets of stone, like those which he had broken, and to present them to him on the top of the mount. It was also promised to him that, according to his humble request, he should there obtain a fuller view of the glory of the Divine presence than he had hitherto enjoyed;—as full a view as mortal man could see and live, but infinitely short of the actual glories of His presence and His throne. Accordingly, as directed, he repaired to the mount with the tablets in his hands, and hid himself in a cleft of the rock. The Lord then descended upon the mountain in a cloud which hid the glory of his presence entirely from the people below, but which, as it passed by the place where Moses lay, enabled him to see as much of that glory as flesh and blood could bear: but what he did see, he, with proper and reverent reserve, abstains from describing ; only we know that as the veiled glory passed by, a Voice was heard proclaiming, " JEHOVAH, JEHOVAH, a God merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abounding in goodness and truth. *Keeping mercy to a thousand generations ;* forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin ; and not altogether destroying : visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and the children's children, *unto the third or fourth generation.*"

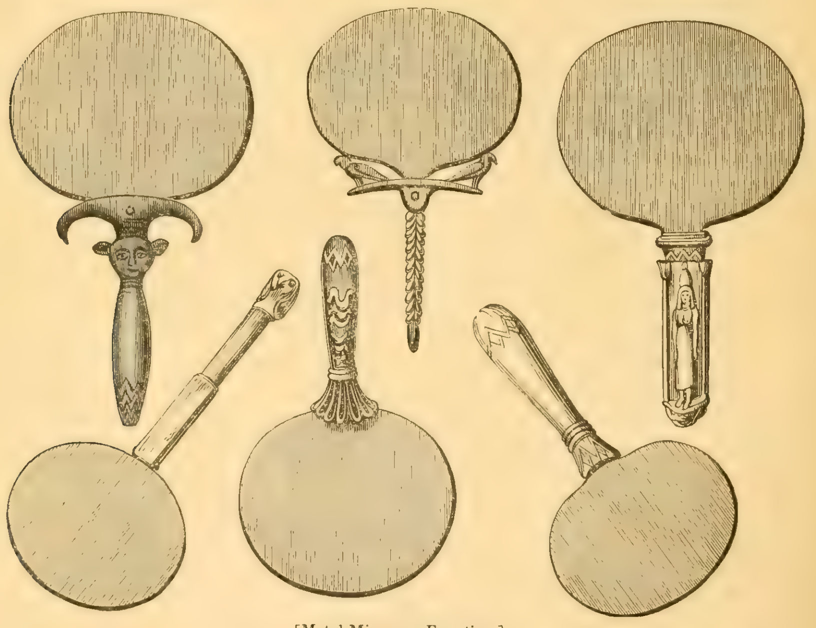
Moses again remained forty days in the mount, without meat or drink. At the end of that time he received back the tablets of stone, written over with the same words which the broken tablets had contained—the ten commandments ; and this was probably intended as a token of the renewal of the covenant between God and the Hebrew people. Moses knew not that he had received a ray of that surpassing glory which had shone upon him, by virtue of which his countenance beamed with such heavenly light that Aaron and all the people, when he came down, were afraid to approach him. This light remained upon his countenance, and was so dazzling, that he found it convenient to cover his face with a veil in his general intercourse with the people, and appeared unveiled only when he drew near to God to receive His commands, and when he repeated those commands to the people, in whose eyes his authority and importance were, doubtless, much enhanced by this splendid peculiarity in his personal appearance.

During this stay of Moses in the mount, a visionary pattern of the tabernacle or portable temple, which he had formerly been directed to construct, was exhibited to him, and he was commanded to carry into effect the instructions he had received, all proceedings thereon having been prevented by the late unhappy circumstances.

The plan of the new establishment was highly acceptable to the Israelites, and they entered into it with great eagerness and zeal. It held out to them the prospect of a splendid temple, with costly utensils, and with a numerous priestly caste, the chief of them gorgeously arrayed, to present incense, and offerings, and sacrifices. A splendid ritual they had been accustomed to admire and (as we learn from various intimations) to imitate in Egypt ; and this admiration and imitation had but lately led them into a very great sin. The new establishment must therefore be to some extent regarded as a concession to the notions of a people, who, like all others at that time, were incapable of understanding that purely spiritual worship which God himself would have counted of the most value. It is, indeed, easy to see that a people circumstanced as the Israelites were, and imbued as they were with Egyptian notions, might be the more easily kept in the right way through a splendid ritual directed to the proper object ; while, by a rigid interdiction of all these ceremonies, and acts, and apparatus of worship, which existed in other nations, such a people would stand exposed to very great danger of being corrupted or drawn aside from their own more severe and simple system. As a matter of mere human policy, therefore, it was, in the first instance, probable that such ritual institutions would be given to this people. But although we see that there was in these institutions much of concession to the ineradicable notions of the people for whom they were

designed, they were so framed as to comprehend great ulterior objects, and to realize the largest amount of religious and political good which could possibly be derived from them.

As it is necessary that these institutions should, in the next chapter, engage a portion of our attention, we have only alluded to the subject here, in order to explain the uncommon satisfaction which the Israelites manifested on this occasion. No sooner were they made acquainted with the materials which would be required for the works of the tabernacle and its contents, and for the dresses and ornaments of the priests, than they poured in, with the most profuse liberality, whatever suitable articles they possessed: so that in a very short time Moses was obliged to have it proclaimed throughout the camp, that no more offerings were to be made for the sanctuary, as there was already enough, and more than enough for every purpose. The lists of the articles contributed is very interesting, not only as showing the large quantity, but the nature and quality, of the wealth in their possession, and all of which they had probably brought from Egypt. These consisted chiefly of articles in brass, silver, and gold, intended to be melted down for the service required, together with precious stones, costly woods, rich stuffs, skins, oils, incense, and spices. The women were eminently distinguished on this occasion. They contributed their personal ornaments and trinkets; while their mirrors, of polished brass,



[Metal Mirrors.—Egyptian.]

were given up to form the brazen laver. Among all pastoral nations, the duty of forming into cloth the wool of the sheep, and the hair of the goat, devolves upon the women, and forms the principal occupation of their lives; and on the present occasion the women of Israel were busied in spinning, twisting, and weaving * the clothes required for the hangings of the tabernacle.

When we consider that all the offerings were voluntary, with the exception of the small sum of half a shekel of silver, levied upon every male above twenty years of age, and yet find that the whole contribution *of gold and silver only* was worth about 185,000*l*. of our money, we shall have a strong idea, not only of the willing zeal of the Israelites, but of the splendour of the small fabric on which so much wealth was expended.

* The manner in which weaving is carried on by the women of pastoral tribes is shown in the cut at page 144. Our present cut exhibits the intermediate process of winding the yarn.

The practical director of all the work was an ingenious man of the tribe of Judah, Bezaleel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur; and with him was Aholiah, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, "an engraver, and designer, and embroiderer in blue, and in purple, and in scarlet,



[Winding the Yarn.]

and in cotton." It is so far satisfactory, that these curious, and, for the age, interesting works were not executed under the direction of Egyptians, although it is not unlikely that the skill of such of that nation as were in the camp was made available in some of the practical operations; but there can be no question that Bezaleel and Aholiah had been instructed in Egypt in that knowledge which qualified them for the service they undertook. No one will, at the present day, contend that the Hebrews could know anything of the finer arts, but what they had learnt of the Egyptians during their sojourn and bondage in Egypt. And in this point of view the costly and ingenious works which were executed in the desert throw much light upon the state of the arts in that early age among the Egyptians, while they illustrate the extent of the obligations of the Israelites, in the finer arts of life, to that ingenious people. The information thus supplied is perfectly in agreement with that which the sculptured and painted remains of ancient Egypt now offer to us.

Such was the earnestness of all parties, that the tabernacle, with all its rich furniture, and costly apparatus, together with the splendid dress of the high priests, and the robes of the common priests, were all completed in less than six months. The tabernacle was erected, and all things connected with it disposed in proper order on the first day of the second year of the departure from Egypt. The Levites were then set apart as a sacerdotal and learned caste, like the priestly caste in Egypt; and out of this caste the family of Aaron was solemnly consecrated to the higher offices of the priesthood—Aaron himself being appointed the high priest. When all was finished, the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle; and the more public and outward sign of his presence, the pillar of cloud—that pillar which became a blaze of fire by night—rested upon it. The setting of the whole in order probably occupied a week; for it was not until the eighth day of the month that the regular services of the splendid ritual were commenced by the new high priest, who then offered upon the great altar the various kinds of sacrifices which the law required. In token of divine acceptance and complacency, a fire darted forth from that "glory" which represented the Lord's presence, and consumed the burnt offering. When the people saw this, "they shouted, and fell upon their faces." It was afterwards directed that the fire thus miraculously kindled should be kept up and employed in all the sacred services.

It seems to have been shortly after this that the chiefs of each tribe came, on successive days, and appeared before Moses and Aaron with a very considerable offering for the sacred service, contained in six carts, each drawn by two oxen—in all, seventy-two carts. The offering of every chief was precisely the same, consisting of a silver platter, weighing five pounds

five ounces, troy; a silver sprinkling basin, of about three pounds, and a golden incense pot, of about five ounces. Besides this, their offering contained fine flour and incense, together with several animals, for a feast-offering. Their donations were received by Moses and Aaron, and set aside for the service of the tabernacle.

Not long after this a grievous calamity befel the priestly family. Nadab and Abihu, the two eldest sons of Aaron—those who were with Moses in the mount—went into the tabernacle to offer incense, having in their censers common fire, instead of that hallowed fire which had been miraculously kindled on the altar of burnt offering. This neglect was punished by a fire [perhaps lightning] from the Lord, which struck them dead on the spot, without injuring their robes, or the exterior of their persons. This may seem harsh; but it was obviously necessary at the commencement of these institutions that their sanctity should be protected, and the highest reverence for the divine presence inculcated, at whatever cost. "Holy will I be accounted," said the Lord on this occasion, "by those who approach me; and before all the people will I be glorified." Aaron was silent. Moses ordered the bodies of his nephews to be carried outside the camp, and buried without any mourning or funeral ceremony. It is probable that the sin of Nadab and Abihu was caused and aggravated by drunkenness; for, immediately after this the Lord spoke *to Aaron*, forbidding that he or his sons should drink wine, or strong drink, when they were to officiate in the tabernacle, lest they died; suggesting that Nadab and Abihu had done so, and had died for it. All these circumstances appear to have occurred in the first month of the second year of the departure from Egypt.

At the beginning of the next month, Moses was directed to take a census of the adult male population—that is, of the men above twenty years of age, fit to bear arms. The reason for this probably was, that the last census (which enabled the historian to state that the number of such persons who left Egypt was 600,000) had been taken by the Egyptians, and was perhaps some years old. Moses and Aaron were assisted in this undertaking by twelve persons of consideration—heads of families—one from each tribe. The result of this census is valuable, from the information it gives of the relative numerical importance of the several tribes; thus,—

Reuben	46,500
Simeon	59,300
Gad	45,650
Judah	74,600
Issachar	54,400
Zebulon	57,400
Ephraim	40,500
Manasseh	32,200
Benjamin	5,400
Dan	62,700
Asher	41,500
Naphtali	53,400
Total	603,550

But as the Levites were not destined to bear arms, they are not included in this computation; but from an enumeration of that tribe taken for another purpose, we learn that the males above *a month* old did not exceed 22,273, so that the number of *adult* males of that tribe could hardly have been one-half that of the lowest of the other tribes.

When the population had thus been numbered, a regular organization of the camp was instituted. The whole host was formed into four great divisions, each consisting of three tribes, and taking its name from the principal tribe. These were to encamp, under their several banners, so as to form a hollow square, in the centre of which was the tabernacle, immediately around which the Levites were to encamp. The east side of the square was formed by the camp of Judah—containing the tribes of Judah, Issachar, and Zebulon: Ephraim, with Manasseh and Benjamin, was on the west: on the north were Dan, Asher, and Naphtali; and

on the south, Reuben, Simeon, and Gad. This beautiful and orderly arrangement attracted the admiration of strangers, as we may gather from the exclamation of Baalam,—"How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel!"

It was also directed that in their removals the eastern division should first leave the ground, followed by the southern division, and that by the tabernacle, while the west and north divisions were to succeed in the rear. The removal of the pillar of cloud was to be the signal for their removal, and its resting for their rest.

During the protracted stay at this place, Moses was favoured with frequent intercourse with God, in which he received the body of laws which bear his names, and which were delivered not in any regular or systematic form, but as occasion seemed to require or suggest. At first Moses received the command from the Lord upon the mountain, under the circumstance of great solemnity, which we have recorded. After his second stay of forty days upon the mountain, it does not appear that he again repaired thither to receive the divine commands. The next form in which these awful interviews were conducted commenced before this last visit to Sinai, and appears to have continued until the erection of the tabernacle. After the sin in the matter of the golden calf, Moses, it will be remembered, removed his tent at a considerable distance from the camp, and called it the Convention tent. He seems to have resided there for a time; and if we rightly collect the meaning of the sacred narrative, after this sin had been forgiven, he returned to live in the camp, but left this tent standing, under the charge of Joshua, who was always there. Wherever Moses went to consult the Lord, or to receive his commands, he proceeded to this tent; and when he entered the tent, the pillar of cloud descended and stood at the door, while the Lord spoke therefrom to Moses. Whenever Moses left the camp to proceed to this tent, the people came to the doors of their own tents, and followed him with their eyes until he entered the tent; and when they saw the pillar of cloud come and settle at the door, they all arose and worshipped, every one at the door of his own tent.* After the erection of the tabernacle, Moses entered it whenever he sought counsel of God; and then he heard a VOICE speaking to him from between the cherubim above the ark, in the most holy place.

It seems to have been about this time† that Jethro, the Midianite, the father-in-law of Moses, found out that the famous prophet through whom the Lord had delivered Israel from the bondage of Egypt, was no other than the husband of his daughter. No sooner did he learn this than he set forth, with his son Hobab, to convey to him his wife and two sons. They were all received very affectionately by Moses, who took his father-in-law to his tent, and gave him a full account of all which had occurred since their separation. And when the old man heard of the wonders which had been wrought for the deliverance of Israel, he blessed Jehovah, and acknowledged that he now knew him to be greater than all other Gods. This sort of expression may imply that he had previously rendered him a divided worship, and, after all, falls short of the true Hebrew belief. That there was *no God* but Jehovah, was that belief; but we see, always, that the highest point of doctrine which even the best of men, not Hebrews, could reach, was, that Jehovah was the *greatest* of the Gods. Among the great differences of opinion and shades of belief, this was a broad and important distinction. In accordance with this conviction, Jethro delayed not to present to Jehovah burnt offerings and other sacrifices; after which Aaron and the elders of Israel came to pay their respects to the father-in-law of Moses, and to eat with him of the feast offerings.

During his stay in the camp, Jethro was much struck to observe the fatigue and anxiety which Moses underwent in sitting all day surrounded by a crowd of people to hear their complaints, and to settle their differences, according to the statutes which had lately been promulgated. He warned him that this labour was too heavy for him, and that he could not

* Exod. xxxiii. 7-11.

† The chapter which records this visit (Exod. xviii.) is placed between that which records the arrival at Rephidim and the victory over the Amalekites, and that which records the encampment at Sinai, *suggesting* that Jethro came while the Hebrews were at Rephidim. But Lightfoot has shown, from the clearest internal evidence and the historical connection, that the account of Jethro's visit is not related in the order of time—which order would have given it the place which we assign it in our narrative.—See Lightfoot's 'Harmony under A. M. 2515.'

with safety continue to perform it alone; and his judicious advice was, that he should commit their common and daily affairs to faithful and just men, who should, according to their ability, be appointed to act in regular subordination over the subdivisions of the people into thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens,—Moses himself withdrawing into the more high and distant place of one before whom only matters too difficult for the decision of the inferior judges were to be brought.

Moses saw the wisdom of this advice, and proceeded to act upon it. He stated to the people his inability to bear the burdensome charge of them and their contentions, and directed them to make choice, in their several tribes, of persons of known wisdom and prudence, whom he might appoint to be their rulers. They answered, "The thing which thou hast spoken is proper for us to do;" and afterwards, in appointing the persons of whom they had made choice, he gave them an admirable charge, and instructed them fully in the duties they were to perform.*

Knowing they were about to journey into the wilderness of Paran, Moses was very anxious to engage his brother-in-law, Hobab, not to return to Midian with his father, but to remain and act as the guide of the Israelites through the wilderness; for although the guidance of the cloudy pillar was sufficient to indicate their general course, and the places for their encampments, it does not appear that its directions were so minute as to render the services of a person acquainted with the country of no value, especially in pointing out the places where water and fuel might be obtained. Hobab at first manifested some reluctance, which was at last overcome by the assurance that he should freely participate in the benefits which the Lord had promised to Israel.

* Compare Exod. xviii. with Deut. i. 9-18. From the ninth verse of this last passage it appears that the institution was proposed to the people, and adopted at the very time that their approaching departure from Sinai was made known to them. This of course confirms the place we have assigned to the transaction in our narrative.



[Present Inhabitants of Sinai.]

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES.

([1]) NAME OF THE RED SEA, p. 191.—As the common and not unreasonable conclusion among the uninstructed is, that the gulf takes its name from the red, or reddish hue of its waters, it is satisfactory to find that the actual appearance is that of a deep *blue*. Very various have been the reasons assigned for this name. All agree that the waters are not red. Some, however, allege that there are parts which appear red, owing to a red sand at the bottom; while others conclude that the name is owing to a red appearance in the coral reefs which abound in this sea. But we do not know that the *surfaces* of rocks, even of red coral, exhibit much of a red appearance. The more received explanation supposes that the sea took its name from the Edomites, who at one period had settlements on the Ælanitic Gulf. *Edom* means *red;* and if it took from the Edomites the name of "the sea of Edom," it was natural that the Greeks should render this into the Erythræan Sea, which has the same meaning—of Red Sea. It is certain that, in the time of the Hebrew kings, the Red Sea was considered as being in the land of Edom.* But the Bible never gives it the name of the Sea of Edom, but always calls it *Yam Suph* (ים סוף) the Reedy Sea; and there are some grave objections to the conclusion that the Edomites gave the sea the name it has so long borne. If a *physical* reason for the name could be found, it would be much the best to resort to that for an explanation. We have seen that there is no appearance in the *waters* to suggest a cause for the name; but it may seem to have been very possibly suggested by the predominant red appearance of the porphyry and granite which compose the higher mountains that bound, on the right hand and on the left, that portion of this basin with which the ancients were best acquainted.

([2]) THE UNKNOWN TREE, p. 192.—So we have called the tree which was shown to Moses, and whereby the bitter waters of Marah were made fit for use. The question connected with this operation is,—whether the effect proceeded from the inherent virtue of the tree in sweetening bad water; or that it had no such virtue, and that the effect was purely miraculous. In support of the former alternative, it may be asked why the tree should have been pointed out and used at all, unless it had a curative virtue? And to this the answer may be found in numerous instances in which God manifests a purpose of working even his miracles in accordance with the general laws by which he governs the world, and for that purpose disguising the naked exhibition of supernatural power, by the interposition of an *apparent* cause; while yet the true character of the event is left indisputable, by the utter inadequacy of the apparent cause, to produce, by itself, the resulting effect. This tends to show that the tree, or portion of it, need not be supposed, from the mere fact of its being employed, to have had an inherent curative virtue. It had not *necessarily* any such virtue; and that it positively had not such virtue, seems to follow, or, at least, to be rendered more than probable by the consideration —that, in the scanty and little diversified vegetation of this district, any such very desirable virtues in a tree, or part of a tree, could scarcely have been undiscovered before the time of the history, and if they had been discovered, could not but have been known to Moses; and the divine indication of the tree would not have been needful. And, again, if the corrective qualities were inherent, but were at this time first made known, it is incredible that so valuable a discovery would ever have been forgotten; and yet it is manifest that in after-times the Hebrews had not the knowledge of any tree which could render bad water drinkable; and the inhabitants of the desert have not only not preserved the knowledge of a fact which would have been so important to them, but have not discovered it in the thirty-five centuries which have since passed. This is shown by the inquiries of travellers, some of whom were actuated by the wish of finding a plant which might supersede the miracle. Burckhardt confesses that, after numerous inquiries, he could never learn that Arabs were acquainted with any plant or tree possessing such qualities; but he regrets that he omitted to make this inquiry at Marah in particular. Lord Lindsay, remembering this regret, did make particular inquiries at that place. "I asked whether they had any means of sweetening bad water; and he mentioned the *mann*, a gum that exudes from the tamarisk tree, and the juice of the *homr* berry. The *homr* plant,

* 1 Kings, ix. 26; 2 Chron. viii. 29.

and *tarfah*, or tamarisk tree, grow in great abundance in Wady Gharandel. The former bears small, red, juicy berries, which they squeeze into water : the *mann* has a strong aromatic taste, like turpentine. One of our guides had a piece of it, which I tasted: they keep it in casks, melt it when required, and spread it on their bread like honey. Some have taken it for the miraculous *manna*—too absurd an opinion to be confuted. Are we to understand that the effect produced on the bitter waters of Marah, by casting in the tree, showed to Moses by the Almighty (or 'something of a tree,' as the Arabic version runs), was also miraculous? If not, it has been suggested that the *mann* or the *homr* juice may have been the specific employed. The *homr* is, however, a mere shrub, and had the whole valley for miles round been full of *tarfah* trees, or *homr* bushes, there would scarcely have been enough to sweeten water sufficient for such a host as that of Israel. Moreover, the Israelites were here within a month after the institution of the Passover, at the vernal equinox, whereas the *mann* harvest does not take place till June. This alone, I think, must decide the question in favour of the miracle." This traveller goes on to tell us that the Hebrew name of the tree in question was *alvah*, whence he is led to conclude, from the analogy of the names, it might be identified with the species of acacia to which the Arabians give the name of *elluf*. But all that is said on this point goes for nothing, as it happens that the tree is *not* called in Hebrew *alvah*, nor is any name given to it, but it is indicated simply as עץ *aitz*, a tree. His concluding observation is more correct:—"Whatever the tree was, it can have had no more inherent virtue in sweetening the bitter well of Marah, than the salt had, which produced the same effect when thrown by Elisha into the well of Jericho.*"

This leaves little to be said. As Lord Lindsay proposed his question to an Arab who could not apprehend his precise object, through an interpreter, who probably apprehended it as little, there can be no doubt that the answer applies to the supposition that he wanted to know how a cup of bad water might have its unpalateableness disguised, so as to be made drinkable ; and it is much the same, *in effect*, as might be given in this country to a similar question,—"Put a little sugar, or a little lemon-juice into it." Probably the Bedouins use *both* of the articles mentioned—being a sweet and an acid—in making a kind of sherbet. It will not do to think of the Hebrew, as squeezing the juice of little red berries, or as mixing up a vegetable gum in the well of Marah, *even if* a sufficient quantity of either could have been procured to sweeten water enough for the thousands of Israel. This, therefore, being the only case in which the Arabs of Sinai have been brought to mention the only articles known to them as used for the indicated purpose, does the more abundantly prove that they know no tree answering to the description which, without the miracle, it would be necessary to require. In this, as in many other dealings with the miracles, it is easier to understand and believe the miracle itself, than the best explanations which have been given.

* Lindsay, i. 263-5.

The Jewish writers, generally, are so far from looking for any inherent virtues in the "tree," that they, contrariwise, affirm that its natural quality was rather to make that bitter which was sweet, than to sweeten that which was bitter. The Targums call it the bitter tree *Ardiphne*, which most of the Hebrew interpreters take to signify the same to which botanists give the name of Rhodo-daphne, the rose-laurel.

([3]) Baking, &c., p. 194.—We consider the three cuts which we give here to be very interesting; as they doubtless convey nearly all the information we need concerning the pounding, kneading, and baking, mentioned in the early Scriptures. They may require some little explanation.

"*Pounding in a Mortar.*"—This shows the form of the pestles and mortars, and the mode of using them in pounding any articles in large quantities. The scene in the lower compartment of this cut reminds one who has been in the East of the manner in which rice is husked and cleared. The mortars in the cut are probably like those now employed, hollowed blocks of wood. The pestles are different from those now generally employed, but the manner of use, by men striking alternately, is the same. We see also that the sieve was, in those remote times, used when necessary, to sift that which had been pounded in the mortar.

"*Kneading.*"—From this we see that dough was kneaded either by the hands, or by the feet—that mixed with the hands being in a more fluid state than that kneaded with the feet. The cut is of additional interest, from its indicating the very probable forms of the "kneading-troughs," in which the Hebrews took their dough with them from Egypt.* These kneading-troughs appear to be made of

* Exod. xii. 34.

rushes, or palm leaves, and therefore very portable.

"*Baking.*"—This cut is very variously instructive:—*a* and *e* are ovens; a man is cleaning out that at *a*, and the one at *e* is alight, and nearly ready for use, the ascending points at top represent flames. Ovens of this shape are still used in Western Asia, though not exclusively. They are sometimes of brickwork, and sometimes of stout earthenware, daubed with mud or plaster, to retain the heat. No doubt the Israelites had such when in their more settled state, but probably not in the desert; for although those of earthenware are portable, they are inconvenient to remove, and liable to injury. But the mode of baking at *d*, upon a propped pan, or plate of metal, under which a fire is kindled, is so simple, and the apparatus so portable and lasting, that it is still much employed in baking those thin cakes into which the western Asiatics like to make their bread. This is probably the "pan" mentioned in Lev. ii. 5, 7; but whether the "oven" of verse 4 be that which we have just noticed, we cannot say. There are other ways of baking; but the only other convenience like *an oven* which they were likely to possess, would be a pit dug in the ground. The men at *b* and *c* are making dough into cakes, and the man at *f* is bearing the cakes upon his head to the oven. Unquestionably, the Hebrews were in Egypt well acquainted with all the processes which these cuts exhibit.

(4) MIRACLES:—THE MANNA, p. 195.—Seeing that all the miracles of the Old Testament must necessarily pass historically under our notice, we are very anxious to be rightly understood on the subject; and the manna affords a very favourable opportunity for explanation. And yet we have but little to say which will not have been anticipated by any one who has paid a reasonable degree of attention to the manner in which the miracles which have already occurred has been related, and to the remarks which have incidentally been made.

It will have been seen, then, that our disposition is, and has been, not to multiply miracles after the sort in which this has been done by many more zealous than wise friends of revelation. In all cases we allow the miracle without question, which is distinctly claimed to be such in the Scriptures, and where the circumstances clearly indicate that a miracle was necessary,—we say "necessary," because we are persuaded that the Almighty has almost invariably chosen to act through natural agencies and under the laws which he has imposed on nature, whenever they are adequate to produce the required result. But there is another class of events which are not expressly declared to be miracles in the Bible, but which many interpreters conclude to be such, from the appearances which they take and from the circumstances with which they are connected. To these we shall apply the rule of necessity also; and if we find that a miracle was indispensable, we shall believe that a miracle took place, not else. This is because we believe it is one of the beautiful peculiarities of the Bible, that it has none of those gratuitous and barren wonders which form the mass of the pretended miracles which the various systems of false religion produce. While therefore we despise the feeling which induces many who are afraid to deny miracles absolutely, to nibble at the great miracles with the view of reducing them to *almost* human probabilities: we lament, on the other, that opposite feeling—wrong in a right direction—which leads many good people to magnify into miracles all events which are in the least degree removed from the course of every-day experience.

As much of all the confusion of statement incident to the subject arises from confusion of ideas, or rather from the want of distinct ideas, it would be well if we had distinct terms for describing or rather for distinguishing—

1. Miracles of Fact.
2. Miracles of Time.
3. Miracles of Circumstance.

And in that case we think it might be found out that many persons who have been set down as unsound in this test matter of miracles, were, in fact, without its being perhaps clear to their own minds, only uncertain about the *class* to which one or more particular miracles should be referred.

We may as well define that by *Miracles of Fact* we would mean events which are different from the ordinary course of nature, such as raising the dead, dividing a sea or a river, or causing the advancing shadow to recede. By *Miracles of Time* we mean events of which it was foretold that they would occur at a particular time, and which did accordingly occur. In some cases it might be doubtful whether the event were a miracle or not, but for the precise correspondence in time with the intimation previously given. This is as much a prophecy as a miracle, and might be called a *Prophecy-Miracle*. By the third class,—*Miracles of Circumstance*—we would be understood to denote the *application* of ordinary circumstances to effectuate purposes so special and determinate as to evince the interposition of a Divine power. Many of the Old Testament

miracles are of this class, and if they occurred in our own day, would probably be called rather "over-ruling providences" than "miracles." But in truth every marked act of over-ruling providence *is* a miracle. Thus we have three terms which we shall take the liberty to employ when determinate expressions are required. These are—Fact Miracles, Prophecy Miracles, Circumstance Miracles. With reference to the second of these, it is not, perhaps, necessary to observe that the prophecy, though sufficient of itself in particular cases to constitute a miracle, may be and frequently is connected with both the other classes of miracles.

The history of the manna, to some observations on which we have not unsuitably prefixed these remarks, seems to us very remarkable. We incline to think it the greatest of the Old Testament miracles, and the one that least admits of even a plausible explanation on natural principles. Yet there is not, for this very reason, one of the miracles which more vigorous efforts have been made to explain, all ending in most egregious failure. In fact, this is not one miracle, but a most astonishing combination of *many*. It was a regular supply of food—a substitute for corn—during nearly forty years; it fell around the camp of the Israelites regularly, in all places and at all seasons during all their removals; the supply was regularly intermitted one day in every week, compensated by a double supply the preceding day; it became unfit for use if kept to the next day, and yet once a week it might be kept for two days; and when the miracle was about to be discontinued, *as no longer necessary*, a pot full of it was directed to be laid aside, and preserved as a memorial to future generations. And all these marvellous circumstances are not mere abstract qualities of the manna, declared to recommend it to our admiration, but are *historical* facts,—facts inseparably involved with the history of a people.

It, therefore, would seem, as we have intimated, to be an attempt of no common hardihood to bring this particular miracle, or rather this closely compacted set of miracles, within the limits of a natural probability. Yet this attempt has been made by several very able writers; and on this stone they have all stumbled. No one of them has ventured to look fairly through it in all its circumstances, and some have got rid of it in some such quiet way as this:—"The manna is still collected from trees which *may have been* formerly very numerous in the neighbourhood of Mount Sinai."*

The case is as stated in the extract given from Lord Lindsay in the second note. In some of the valleys of Sinai grows a species of tamarisk, from which exudes a substance to which the Arabs give the name of *mann*, and which is alleged to be the *manna* by which the Hebrews were sustained in the wilderness. We have compared the various accounts of the appearance, qualities, and use of this substance with that which the Scripture gives of the manna, and the result is that the differences in *all* these points are great and irreconcilable, while the faint resemblances are not at all peculiarly offered by this product, but are such as are offered by numerous other substances similarly produced. It is clear that what has led to its being taken for the manna is *first*, that the Arabs call it *mann*, and second, that it is found in the peninsula of Sinai; but for this no one would ever have fancied for a moment that it was, or had any relation to, the manna of Scripture. Now with respect to the *name*, it will be recollected that the food bestowed on the Israelites took its name from their previous ignorance of it leading them to ask one another, "What is this?" and if, therefore, the Arabs in giving the name of *mann* to the product in question, have in view any reference to the manna of the Israelites, it must be derived from *their* conclusion that it was the same article with which that people were fed; or else from their merely giving to a product useful and agreeable in itself, the name of manna in the way of honour and praise, without any notion of its being the same substance. If the name of *mann*, as applied to this substance, be not merely an accidental coincidence, by which no reference at all to the manna of the Hebrews is intended, the latter would seem the most probable conclusion; for it should be carefully noted that the identity is entirely a fancy of European travellers, not one of whom alleges that the Arabs themselves, who name it *mann*, even hint at *any* connection between it and the manna of the Scriptures.

It is clear, from the very name, that the Israelites were previously unacquainted with the substance which they called *manna;* and it is strongly implied in the command to preserve a vessel of it for a memorial, that it would be seen by them no more: for to preserve a specimen of that which nature continued abundantly to produce, would have been absurd. In considering this matter, it appeared impor-

* 'Sejour des Hébreux en Egypte,' 132.

tant to ascertain the particular species of tamarisk to the product of which the Arabs give the name of *mann*. Fortunately, Burckhardt gives the Arabic name *tarfah*. Now this is the *tamarix gallica;* one of the plants which M. Delisle* sets down in his list of those which grow spontaneously in the valley of the Nile, and also in his list of those which are common to Egypt, Barbary and Syria. It also occurs very frequently in Arabia Petræa and Mesopotamia. There is, in fact, scarcely any product which could have been better known to the Hebrews *before* and *after* their wandering in the desert. They could never have been at a loss to know *what it was;* and any attempt to persuade them that it was a miraculous supply of food from heaven could only have occasioned laughter and disgust.

But even if the produce of the *tarfah* were the manna of Scripture, it would be impossible by the help of this bright discovery to get rid of the miracle. The Hebrews began to get their manna in May, and continued for forty years to have it fresh every day, excepting Saturdays; but the *tarfah* only yields its product in July and August. And then the quantity afforded by a single shrub is so inconsiderable, that it baffles imagination to conceive the forests of tamarisks which would suffice to supply the wants of the Hebrew host wherever they went. Above all, when they remained a year in one place, as in the neighbourhood of Mount Sinai,—where grew the tamarisks that could afford them subsistence all that time?

However this subject be dealt with, if we explain away the miracle related by Moses, we practically require one as great, or greater, to fill its place. We are, therefore, content to take this matter as we find it in the scriptural narrative.

(5) MOUNT SINAI, p. 195.—We long since contended that neither Mount St. Catherine nor Mount Mousa could be the Sinai of Scripture. We are therefore pleased that this conclusion has since received the support of Lord Lindsay's testimony; the rather as his intimate acquaintance with all the Biblical statements renders him a more competent judge on such a question, than many travellers of higher scientific pretensions. This is not a question of science. The following is the substance of his statement, pruned of various considerations concerning the preferable claims of a Jebel Minnegia, of which no one ever heard before, and which was certainly never regarded, like Mount Serbal, as "the Mount of God."

"I have said that neither Jebel Mousa nor Jebel Katerin answer the Scriptural description of Sinai. . . . There is not space enough in the narrow precipitous ravines from which alone the peaks are visible, *or in any other plain or valley in the whole district* for the people to have encamped with such regularity and comfort, as it is evident they did (Exod. xxxii.), nor for their having removed and stood afar off, as they had apparently ample space to do, when trembling at the thunderings and lightnings,—nor, after the golden-calf idolatry, for the tabernacle * to have been pitched without the camp, afar off from the camp, when all the people rose and stood, every man at his tent-door, and looked after Moses till he was gone into the tabernacle.

"Moses went up to the '*top* of the mount,' and God came down upon Mount Sinai, 'on the *top* of the mount,' and the glory of the Lord was 'like devouring fire on the *top* of the mount,' 'in the eyes of the children of Israel,' 'in the sight of *all* the people.' Neither Jebel Mousa nor Jebel Katerin are visible from the plains." We very much wish that Lord Lindsay had ascended Mount Serbal, and given us his opinion of its suitableness to be the scene of the events recorded in the Pentateuch. His knowledge that *this* was anciently considered as the Mount of God, might have recommended this as a preferable course to that of selecting a new mountain, or rather hill, the claims of which he does not make by any means clear.

(6) GOD OR MOSES? p. 198.—There is a large class of sceptical men of whom it would be harsh to say that they sit in the chair of the *scorners*. They are too thoughtful and too candid to deny that Moses was a great and good man, that he was actuated by truly generous and patriotic motives, and that his measures and conduct were eminently wise and noble. Indeed, they exalt rather than disparage his character. Their argument requires him to be great. They are convinced that the facts which the history relates are true;—that Israel was delivered from the hard and bitter bondage of Egypt by his instrumentality; that the multitudes of Israel were fed with manna in the wilderness; that the law was delivered from Mount Sinai;—all this they believe; but in all this they see only Moses and refuse to see GOD. That Moses professed to act but as he was directed by a superior Power, from

* Mémoire sur les Plantes que croissent spontanément en Egypte,' in 'Descript. de l'Egypte,' tome xix. 23, et seq.

* Not *the* tabernacle. See our own statement of this matter,

whom he received the laws which he promulgated, and to whom he sedulously ascribed the glory of all events, is what the persons of whose sentiments we speak very willingly admit; and although they believe this to have been a mere pretence, they do not blame him for it, but approve it rather. They regard it as a wise measure for procuring more respect and attention, more obedience, from an unruly and ignorant multitude, unable to appreciate his character and plans, and insensible of what was really for their good, than could be obtained without the appearance of the superior sanction of a Divine Being, who took a peculiar interest in their affairs; and without the belief that laws given for their government in future time, came from one who was able to enforce them and to punish all disobedience to them. They remind us that other great reformers and law-givers, Minos, Lycurgus, Zoroaster, Mohammed, felt this necessity and acted on it: and with them they compare Moses; but allow that he was greater than they, seeing that it devolved on him to *form* a nation out of the most intractable materials on which a great mind ever undertook to operate. The retirement to the wilderness of Sinai, there to receive, on the cloud-invested summit of "the great mountain," from the hand of God, a system of imperative law, is thus compared with the revelations which other legislators professed to have received in the mountains of Ida, and Hara, and Azerbijan.

Let not the men whose ideas we are endeavouring to represent be misunderstood or unduly reprobated. They deny not God, but they doubt that he took that active part in the laws and proceedings of the Hebrews which their history represents. They are not blind. Their eyes are open; but they see men only as trees walking; and where they might see God they can see the man Moses only.

The motive which such speculators suppose really engaged Moses to lead the people of Israel to the mountains of Sinai, is well and ingeniously developed by M. du Bois Aymé* in these words:—"All the people who inhabit the environs of Mount Sinai believed that God dwelt there. High mountains have always been regarded as the habitual residence of the gods. And this is very natural. There is none of us who at the feet of these enormous masses, does not realize the feeling of his own weakness and unimportance. And the result is solemnizing, and much disposes the mind to the reception of religious impressions. Mountains are also the theatre of many appalling phenomena; and fear not less than gratitude has given to men their first notions of the Divinity. It is from their summits that the devastating torrents are precipitated; it is in their bosom—to the noise of explosions which shake and subvert the earth—that are prepared the reddened stones, the melted minerals, which, in rains of fire and floods of lava, come to swallow up or overturn whole cities; it is over their summits that the winds move with utmost force—that the dark clouds gather under terrible and fantastic forms—and that the thunder bursts with highest grandeur, amid the lightnings, and seems to convulse the valleys.*

"It was by the spectacle of such a storm as this, that Moses hoped to strike the imagination of the Israelites, and to confirm them in the belief of his intercourse with God. Nothing similar had been seen by them under the skies of Egypt, sparkling with light during the day, of the most beautiful azure during the calm nights, and never obscured by any cloud; and it was therefore easy to foresee that the Hebrews would be struck with a religious terror the first time that they saw the lightnings ploughing the dark clouds, and heard the thunder rumble upon the high mountains, where the echoes augmented and prolonged the sound.† Then the clouds presented to them forms the most monstrous and grotesque; and their mobility and their metamorphoses have often inflamed the imaginations of weak and ignorant men: the first have regarded these as the signs of heavenly wrath, and the others as their gods or the shadows of their ancestors. With the thunder all nations have armed the Lord of the universe; and we find that, notwithstanding the progress of science and the extension of education, very many people still regard it with superstitious dread. A great sound gives the idea of force; and the imagination turns it into the angry cry of a powerful and irritated being.

"Moses had long watched his flocks in

* In his 'Notice sur le Séjour des Hébreux en Egypte,' in 'Descript. de l'Egypte,' viii. 133—135.

* "When I read to the Institute of Cairo my 'Memoir' upon the passage of the Red Sea by the Israelites, and upon their sojourn at the foot of Mount Sinai, I announced that this mountain was an extinct volcano: the large volcanic stones which I had seen in the vessels which arrive at Suez from Tor, with the description which Moses gives of the appearance of God upon Mount Sinai, had *suggested* this opinion to me. But after the reading of my 'Memoir,' MM. Coutelle and De Rozière went to the Convent of Mount Sinai; and they found that the mountain was granitic, and *offered no traces of a volcano*." Very good; but our author unhappily mars this by adding,—"A storm, after all, agrees quite as well as a volcanic eruption with the recital of Moses." Indeed! that must be a singular description which equally well answers to such differing phenomena.

† "During the four or five years I passed *in Egypt* I only once heard a thunder-clap, and then it was so feeble that several persons who were with me took no notice of it."

Sinai, and had been a witness of the sublime effects produced by storms upon the high mountain of that name. The recollection of that which he had observed probably engaged this able man to make these phenomena subservient to his designs."

On these views this writer proceeds to examine the passages which refer to the intercourse of Moses with God in the mount. But having indicated the principles of his explanation, we need not follow observations which may easily be anticipated. And we have not noticed them to this extent, so much on account of the rank or character of the persons who entertain such views, as because it happens, in this age of fluctuating principles and halting opinions, that, in reading the biblical narrative, many persons, who wish to think rightly and dread to think wrong, get loose and vague notions into their minds similar, in kind, to those plainly avowed in the extract we have adduced.

As it is to some extent the duty of an historian to vindicate the disputed points of his history, we might be tempted to enter into a detailed reply to such statements and impressions, if our limits allowed and if we thought it necessary. But we do not. Yet lest we should seem to offer poison without the antidote, we may remark:—That in all this statement about the design of Moses in leading the Hebrews to this place, it is fatally forgotten that although such phenomena as are described may have been new to them at this time, they *subsequently* became familiar to them; and the reaction would have been dreadful when they ultimately discovered, as they could not fail to do, that Moses had been imposing natural phenomena upon them for supernatural manifestations of the Divine presence.

On the miracles we will not lay any stress, as persons who take such views as those which we have stated, necessarily must manage to resolve them into a skilful use by Moses of the operation of natural causes, known to and foreseen by him. The miracle which least admits of this treatment is that of the manna, to which therefore we have directed attention in a separate note.

To our minds, there was ample and reasonable cause for leading the Israelites into a situation of the greatest safety that could be found, that they might there receive the organization, the doctrines, and the laws which might fit them for the high destinies which lay before them.

But our answer in chief to all this and everything of the kind—indeed the all-sufficient answer, and the only one which we should seriously think it worth while to make, would be by a reference to the *principle*, the design, the system of the Hebrew history. This design we have sufficiently for our purpose announced in a preceding page;* and we have therefore only now to remark that Moses was not the author of this system; it must have originated with One who saw the end from the beginning, and who dies not, as Moses died. Moses was not necessary to this system, but God was. The system commenced long before Moses was born; and it went on, steadily and surely, long after he was dead, and we see not the end of it yet. He was but an incident in that system, and we have no evidence that he even knew those ultimate results which it was left for time to develop. If he was permitted to comprehend the whole of that marvellously connected design, one section of which it was his destiny to carry on, no measures taken by him could have ensured the gradual development of that design and its extension into remote ages, or have supplied that series of demonstrations by which the system was carried on through and by circumstances which were all necessary, but which did not exist, and, unless prophetically—that is unless through GOD—could not have been imagined in the time of Moses.

It seems therefore to us that the attempt to exclude God from this portion of the Hebrew history, to make Moses the sole deliverer and legislator of the Israelites, is purely the result of imperfect and crude views of parts of that history, without any comprehension of it as an entire and designed whole. In the providence of God it is probable that the history of every nation has *a design*, if it could be but discovered; but as it cannot be discovered, the results seem to be determined by fortuitous circumstances. The history of the Hebrews is not, however, even in appearance, *when viewed as a whole*, fortuitous; and it is the only history in the world that does not *even seem* to be so. The design of that history is repeatedly avowed, is open and complete. To view the history without reference to this most distinguishing peculiarity, and without cognizance of the complete design which is as its living soul,—is to look upon a dead carcase from which the vital spirit has been taken, and which may then easily seem to possess none but earthly elements. That design requires God in every part; and to write the history of the Jews without God is as if one were to write the history of the heavens and omit the sun.

* Page 21—23.

([7]) Destruction of the Golden Calf, p. 202.—As there is not the least question but that all which was known to the Hebrews of the metallurgic arts at this early time, had been acquired in Egypt, the *making* of the golden calf may be taken in evidence, amply confirmed by their existing monuments, of the very great skill in those arts which the Egyptians had attained. But the *destruction* of the same image, in the manner described, is a still more striking evidence of this. The art of thus treating gold was a secret, probably, but known to Moses, in virtue of his perfect acquaintance with all the sciences which the Egyptians cultivated. Goguet, remarking on the subject, observes that those who work in metal know that this is an exceedingly difficult operation. "Commentators have been much perplexed to explain how Moses burnt the golden image, and reduced it to powder. Most of them offer only vain and improbable conjectures. But an able chemist has removed every difficulty on the subject, and has suggested this simple process as that which Moses employed. Instead of tartaric acid, which we employ for a similar purpose, the Hebrew legislator used *natron*, which is very common in the East.* The Scripture, in informing us that Moses made the Israelites drink this powder, shows that he was perfectly acquainted with all the effect of his operation. He wished to aggravate the punishment of their disobedience; and for this purpose no means could have been more suitable: for gold, rendered potable by the process of which I have spoken, is of a most detestable taste." †

To this, from Goguet, it may be well to add that the operation of the acids, which act upon gold is much assisted by the metal being previously heated. In this we see the reason why Moses cast the golden image into the fire in the first instance.

* Stahll. Vitull. aureus, in Opusc. Chym., Phys., Medic., p. 585.

† 'Origine des Lois,' epoq. ii. liv. ii. chap. 14.

The Chapter which is now concluded brings the history to

The year of the world	3765
The year before Christ	1646

CHAPTER V.

THE LAW.



[Egyptian Worship.]

THERE never was a people whose history had such inseparable connection with their laws and institutions, and such necessary dependence on them, as in the case of the Hebrews. The Hebrew people and the Mosaical code bore the relation of agent and of instrument for the purposes of the great objects for which the descendants of Abraham were set apart among the nations; and for these same objects the peculiar code was not less necessary than the peculiar people. The history of the Hebrews is the history of a system, of which the men so called were only a part. The whole must henceforth be regarded in intimate connection, and therefore it becomes very necessary that the other part—the Law—should be clearly understood.

But on account of the involved and disjointed manner in which the details are exhibited in the books of Moses, it is not easy for even very diligent readers of the Bible to acquire clear and connected ideas of the whole system. We have, therefore, judged it expedient to devote the present chapter to such a review of this code as may render the further portions of our history the more clearly understood. To this we now proceed, and shall endeavour in our way to develop the principles of the Law, and to incorporate such explanations as our limits will allow.

A comprehensive view of the system may be taken under the three principal heads of—

I. RELIGION.

II. GOVERNMENT.

III. GENERAL LAW.

With such divisions and sub-divisions as may seem convenient. Thus—

I. RELIGION may be divided into DOGMAS and REGULATIONS.

1. DOGMAS.—These comprehend the ideas concerning GOD and his government which were communicated to the Hebrews; and, for the sake of preserving which, ripening in the world, the Hebrews were set apart as a peculiar people, and the whole ritual system was organized. Or, perhaps, it will be clearer to continue, as before, to describe them as measures taken to *preserve* in the world that knowledge of God which was possessed by the first men, and which had at this time all but disappeared under the operation of idolatry and polytheism, by which the whole earth may be said to have been overspread. It is as levelled against these errors, and against the mistaken views of the Divine character in which the world was already lost,—or rather as designed to guard the chosen race from their most contagious influence, that most of the great body of the Mosaical law is to be understood.

The *positive* doctrines are few and simple; but their massive grandeur becomes apparent when we duly estimate their bearing upon the problems which perplexed the ancient world, and contrast them with the frivolities of doctrine and worship which characterised all other systems of belief.

The whole system of a plurality of gods, of whatever kind, was precluded by the grand declaration that Jehovah, who delivered the seed of Abraham from Egypt, was the only God in heaven or in earth.* His eternity and self-subsistence is not obscurely intimated in such names as JEHOVAH, I AM, I AM THAT I AM, when the force of the original terms is apprehended, and seems also to be assumed as a matter known from of old.† That God was the Creator of the heavens and the earth—of all nature and of all beings,‡ was, in those days, a truly grand and distinguishing doctrine. We are taught it from our infancy; and, therefore, to recognise its importance and grandeur, as a peculiar doctrine of Mosaism, it is necessary to recollect that for more than 1200 years after Moses the ancient mind was unable to form the idea of a God so exalted in character as to be an agent in the formation of the universe. Some of the most mentally endowed men of ancient times fell far short of this and other important doctrines, which were matters of familiar knowledge to every man, woman, and child among the Hebrews; and this fact affords a most emphatic answer to the question—"Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" Anaxagoras (who came to Athens B.C. 456) was the first who taught that the world was *organised* or *constructed*, by some MIND or mental being, out of matter which this philosopher supposed had always existed. This opinion was adopted and enforced by Socrates, Plato, and others. But Aristotle supposed the world to have existed eternally in its organised form; while the Epicureans held that a fortuitous concurrence of atoms was the origin of all things. Thus we see that the most capacious intellects could grasp no higher doctrine than the existence of a supreme architect or framer of the universe out of materials which existed before all time; and this, after the Hebrews had for ages entertained the belief in a Supreme *Creator* of all things. No other people believed in an act of *creation*, properly so called. They were likewise taught that this Supreme Creator was also the Governor of the world,—a doctrine which, although as familiar to the Hebrews and to ourselves as the other, was equally incomprehensible to the ancient mind. Even those of the old philosophers who believed in the existence of a Supreme Architect [not Creator] of the world, were far from thinking that the world was practically governed by him. They held the opinion of an animating principle in matter, originating with the Supreme Framer, by which the material world was governed. Things of minor importance, especially those which influenced the destiny of man, were

* Exod. xx. 2, 3; Deut. iv. 35, vi. 4, xxxii. 39. † Deut. xxxiii. 27. ‡ Gen. i.

referred by all classes to the government of many *gods*, who were accordingly the objects of worship, and not the Supreme Architect.

Further to estimate the supreme importance of these two doctrines that Jehovah was the Creator of the universe and the sole Governor of the world, it is necessary to recollect the prevalence of the belief in national or tutelary gods; the tendency to which belief is constantly manifested in the Old Testament, by the disposition of the heathen to regard Jehovah as merely the national God of the Jews, on a level with their own national gods;§ and there is strong evidence that the chosen people did themselves, at times, fall into this opinion. Hence there is visible a constant anxiety to impress upon the Hebrew mind the universality of the Divine attributes, these being among the greatest of the great truths which they were destined to preserve. Moses calls him by the name JEHOVAH who created heaven and earth,* and who sent the deluge.† Abraham and Melchisedek address Him as the Most High God, who created heaven and earth.‡ He is acknowledged by Joseph to be the all-wise Governor of the universe.§ He calls himself Jehovah who is always the same;|| who both predicted and performed those wonders in Egypt and in Arabia, which proved him to be omniscient and omnipotent;¶ who is the author of every living thing;** who is invisible (for the descriptions which represent him as appearing at times in a bodily form are symbolical);†† who is the Lord of heaven and the earth, and everything in them; and the Friend of strangers as well as of the Hebrews.‡‡ Moses everywhere exhibits him as the Omnipotent; the Ruler of all men; One who cannot be swayed by gifts and sacrifices, but who is kind and merciful to the penitent.

On the question—"Whether the character of JEHOVAH, as represented by Moses, is that of a Being inexorably just?" we are happy to introduce the following observations of Professor Jahn:—§§

"God is often represented by Moses as a just Judge, who punishes with severity those who are wicked and disobey his commandments. The inconstant, stiff-necked and intractable people with whom Moses had to deal could not be restrained from vice, nor brought into subjection to the laws, without holding up such a representation. Such a representation was the more necessary, because JEHOVAH was not only the GOD, but, in a strict sense, the KING of the Jews, whom it behoved, consequently (in order to render due protection to the righteous), to condemn transgressors, and make them objects of punishment. Had it been otherwise,—had he not defended the good from the attacks of the bad, or had free pardon been offered to all the guilty,—all his laws, as a KING, would have been useless. Still, although what has been now said be true, the statement which some have made, that Moses has made God an inexorable Judge, and that *only*, is utterly untrue.

"The original promises to the patriarchs, which were so often repeated to their descendants; the liberation from Egyptian bondage; the laws enacted in the wilderness; the entrance granted to the Hebrews into the land of Canaan; are deeds of kindness which prove the beneficence of God.|||| Hence it is often inculcated upon the Hebrews to exhibit gratitude towards God; and the fact also that they were expressly commanded to love God, is at least an implied admission of his kindness and beneficence.¶¶ Moses calls God the Father of his people, the merciful, the clement, the benign, the faithful JEHOVAH, who exhibits, through a thousand generations, the love of a Parent to his good and faithful followers; who forgives iniquity and transgression, but to whose mercy, nevertheless, there are limits, and who visits the sins of the fathers on the posterity to the third and fourth generation.***

"The infliction of punishments, even to the fourth generation (*i. e.* by means of public calamities, the consequences of which would be experienced even by posterity), a principle which appears even in the FUNDAMENTAL LAWS,††† has given offence to many, who are either unwil-

* Gen. i.; Exod. xx. 8—12, xxxi. 17; Deut. iv. 3.
† Deut. vi. 17.
‡ Gen. xiv. 18—20, xvii. 1, xviii. 16—25.
§ Gen. xxxix. 9, xlv. 5, l. 20.
|| Exod. vi. 3.
¶ Exo. vi. 7, vii. 5, x. 1, 2, xvi. 12, xxix. 46; Deut. iv. 32—36, x. 21.
** Num. xvi. 22, xxvii. 16.
†† Exod. xxxiii. 18—23; Deut. iv. 12—20, 39.
‡‡ Deut. x. 14—18.
§§ 'Biblische Archæologie,' sect. 205.
|||| Deut. vii. 6—9, viii. 2—20, ix. 4—8, x. 1—11.
¶¶ Deut. vi. 4, 5, 11, 12, 15, 22.
*** Deut. viii. 5, xxxii. 6; Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7; Num. xiv. 13; Deut. vii. 9, 10.
††† Exod. xx. 5, 6.

ling or unable to perceive that the prospect of misery falling on their posterity would be a real source of punishment to the parents, who, it may be observed, were, in that age, particularly solicitous about the well-being of their descendants. We learn, nevertheless, from various passages, that the punishments due to the fathers were not so much designed to be really inflicted on their posterity, as to remain to them warnings, that if they trod in their fathers' footsteps, they would expose themselves to the same evil and fearful consequences; and that when they had done evil, their only course was to repent. That such would be the case, the deep and serious evils of the Babylonish captivity gave them so clear a proof, as to preclude all subsequent doubts on the subject: they repented of their evil ways, and, as Moses himself had predicted, became the constant worshippers of God."*

In representing these as the doctrines which the Hebrew people were instructed to believe, and for the sake of preserving which among them the whole system of law was instituted, we have endeavoured to show how important these first principles were, and how necessary their preservation, in the state and tendencies of religious opinion which in those times prevailed. Through the doctrine of Christ, our own religious knowledge is so much in advance of that which the books of Moses communicate, that when its amount is thus nakedly stated, and found to consist of the most plain and simple *elements* of our own belief, we are rather apt to wonder that higher mysteries are not found in a system so elaborately produced and guarded with such care. But these plain facts *were* high mysteries to the world at large. And if we, nourished, as we are, by the strong meats which our advancing age requires, feel the inadequacy for our sustainment of the milk with which the infant was satisfied, let us remember that what is as the food of infants to us was as strong meat to the world at large. The church lay a naked infant in the wilderness. God sent Moses to feed it—not with the strong meats of adult age—but with the milk which was best suited to the infant state. As the child grew, one prophet was sent after another to strengthen gradually her nourishment, and to direct her attention forward to that time when One would come to admit her to the stronger food and more sober raiment of her adult age and perfected growth. He came; and let not the generous diet by which she has since been nourished make her unmindful that this strong food, by which she now lives, would have been unsuitable to her, and could not have been borne by her in her earlier state. Her "nursing fathers" gave her food as she was able to bear it.

The point of view which we therefore take is, that the religion of the Mosaical dispensation is to be regarded not otherwise than as offering the elementary principles which alone the people were then in a condition to receive. These laid a broad foundation for whatever might afterwards be built thereon. But our present concern is exclusively with the Law of Moses; and we have had to consider only what that law taught, without anticipating the developements which the later prophets gradually supplied, and through which the Hebrews ultimately arrived at some stronger and clearer opinions than they could have derived from the books of the law alone.

After this limitation of our present object, it is only necessary to advert to the absence in the books of Moses of any notice of the future existence of the soul, or of a future state of rewards and punishments, which appear of such high importance to ourselves, that any religious system seems incomplete without them. That traces of these doctrines may be collected from the Hebrew Scriptures we have no doubt. The references to them and to others grew clearer in the times of later prophecy; and in the time of Christ, and long before, the Jews certainly did believe in the immortality of the soul and in a state of future rewards and punishments. Nearly all nations have believed this; and the belief of the Hebrews may be traced, probably, like theirs, to original primitive traditions, before the sons of Noah had corrupted their way. If these doctrines were known to Noah and his sons, they were of too intimate concernment to man himself to be ever forgotten, into whatever fanciful ideas of God and his government men might fall. The references to these doctrines which have been traced in the sacred book, are rather passing references to existing ideas, than authoritative declarations from God. There is nowhere any distinct information conveyed—least of all in the

* Lev. xxvi. 20—25; Deut. iv. 28—31, xxx. 1—10.

books of Moses—nor in any one passage are the prospects of a future life held forth to deter from sin or to encourage holiness. No other motives were placed before the ancient Hebrews to pursue the good and avoid the evil, than those which were derived from the benefits and calamities, the rewards and punishments, of this life.

Why, on these important points, the Hebrews were left to the limited and obscure ideas of their patriarchal fathers admits, we think, of a very satisfactory answer:—

There *was* something to satisfy the minds of those few whose hearts were ardently drawn forth beyond the things which belong to this life; while the people at large—whom it was the object of the system to act upon *in a body*, and keep them *together* as standing witnesses to certain doctrines—were not of a disposition to be acted upon by the remote considerations of a future life, and of results which could not be sensibly manifested to them; while the plan of acting upon them through the hope of present good, or the fear of present evil, was suited to the temporal and temporary character of the whole system, and, more particularly, to the position which it pleased God to take as the King of the Hebrew people, and as a king bestowing on his faithful subjects present and manifest evidence of his favour, and inflicting on wrong-doers present and manifest tokens of his displeasure. In fact, it seems to us that the distinct promulgation of this spiritual doctrine would have been an anomalous feature in a system altogether temporal, and which even *required* the exhibition of temporal sanctions.

The distinct and prominent exhibition of this doctrine was therefore most fittingly reserved for the developements of a more spiritual system. It was reserved for JESUS CHRIST "to bring life and immortality to light." The broader doctrine which He taught had no temporal sanctions: it refused to allow the servants of God to look any longer for the temporal benefits which were offered under a temporal system; but while it led them rather to expect outward trouble in this life, from the conflict of adverse principles, it directed their view with all possible distinctness to a state of reward and glory—a treasure—an inheritance—a home—beyond the grave.

2. REGULATIONS.—The regulations which were made to preserve and enforce the dogmas to which our attention has been directed may be comprehended under the terms of *Injunctions* and *Institutions*.

i. *Injunctions*.—The posterity of Abraham were, long before the time of Moses, set apart for the great object of preserving and transmitting the true religion, as contained in the doctrine that there was but one God, the Creator and Governor of the universe, and that he only ought to be worshipped. By the time the Israelites had grown into a people, idolatry and polytheism had become universal; very many of the chosen race had become tainted with these errors; and it was very evident that the Hebrews could no longer live in the midst of nations given to idolatry, without the danger of becoming like them. They were, therefore, assigned to a particular country, the extent of which was so small, that they were obliged, if they would live independently of other nations, to give up, in a great measure, the life of shepherds, and apply themselves to agriculture. The miracles which attended their deliverance from Egypt, their journey to their new country, and their entrance there, brought them back to the faith of their fathers, by affording them convincing evidence that the God who had taken them under his peculiar care was indeed All-powerful and Omniscient, and that the gods of Egypt and of other nations were nothing before Him. With this also must have come to the mass of the people the conviction that Moses, through whom all these wonders had been predicted and performed, was indeed His messenger. This conviction was necessary to engage them to receive those laws and institutions, without which, surrounded as they were by nations who regarded idolatry as conformable to right reason, their religious integrity could not well have been preserved. All these laws and institutions were, with differing intensity, concentrated upon the great object of moulding their habits and ideas, and of engaging them in such pursuits and relations as might form and maintain their character as conservators of the true religion.

To secure these objects, God, in the first instance, proposed Himself, through Moses, as King to the Hebrews, and was accepted in that character by the united voice of the people. This was evidently with the design that the obedience which they rendered him as King might become in some measure identified with the reverence to which he had a right as God; and while they yielded the former, they would be the less likely to withhold the latter. Accordingly, the land of Canaan, which was destined to be occupied by them, was declared to be the land of Jehovah, according to the Oriental notion of sovereignty which makes every monarch the supreme proprietor of the soil. And that this was not to be a mere theoretical sovereignty, but a practical one, was shown by the demand that they, as hereditary occupants of the soil, should pay to the sovereign proprietor a rent of two tithes, such as the Egyptians paid to their king.*

It was then, and not before this, his character as their *immediate* Ruler was recognised—that God promulgated from the clouds of Mount Sinai the prominent laws for the government of the people, regarded as a religious community, which we find in the twentieth chapter of Exodus. The subsequent developements and illustrations of these laws they received, at their own desire, through Moses. The rewards which should accompany obedience, and the punishments which should be the lot of the transgressor, were at the same time announced; and the Hebrews promised by a solemn oath *to obey*.†

Professor Jahn, whose views we have, to a considerable extent, followed in this branch of our inquiry, proceeds to observe:—

" Since, therefore, God was the Sovereign of Palestine and its inhabitants, the commission of idolatry by any inhabitant of the country, even by a foreigner, was a defection from the true king. It was, in fact, treason; it was considered a crime equal to that of murder, and was, consequently, attended with the severest punishment. Whoever even encouraged idolatry was considered seditious, and was obnoxious to the same punishment. Incantations, necromancy, and other practices of a similar nature, were considered equally nefarious with idolatry itself, and deserving an equal punishment. Any one who knew a person to be guilty of idolatry was bound by the law to accuse that person before the judge, although the criminal were a wife, a brother, a daughter, or a son.

" The law, with the penalty attached to it, as we may learn from other sources, had reference only to overt acts of idolatry: it was rather a civil than a religious statute; and the judge who took cognizance of the crime, whilst he had a right to decide upon the deed, the undeniable act, in any given instance, evidently went beyond his promise if he undertook to decide upon the thoughts and feelings of a person implicated, independently of any overt commission of the crime.‡

" It has been observed that the law was not so much a religious as a civil one. The distinction is obvious. A religious law has reference to the feelings; and those laws, consequently, which command us to love God, to believe in him, and to render him a heart-felt obedience, are of this nature.§ It should be remarked that the severe treatment of idolatry, of which we have given a statement, was demanded by the state of society at that period, when each nation selected its deity, not from the dictates of conscience, but from the hope of temporal aid. It was an age when idolaters were very numerous, and when nothing but the utmost severity of the laws could prevent them from contaminating the soil of the Hebrews."

The fact, that the repression of idolatry among the Hebrews was one great and principal object of the law, throws light on many of the precepts and injunctions of which it seems, otherwise, difficult to discover the meaning or to define the object. Many of these injunctions must, probably, always remain obscure, from our ignorance of the idolatrous practices to which they refer. Maimonides, in his excellent treatise, the '*More Nevochim*,' acquaints us with many superstitious or indecent practices of the ancient idolaters which were understood to have been aimed at by particular injunctions and prohibitions of the Mosaical law. The

* Exod. xix. 4—8; Lev. xxvii. 20—34; Num. xviii. 21, 22; Deut. xii. 17—19, xiv. 22, *et seq.*; xxvi. 12—15.

† Exod. xxi.—xxiv.; Deut. xxvii.—xxx. ‡ Deut. xiii. 2—9, xvii. 2—5. § Deut. vi. 4—9, x. 12, xi. 1, 13.

actions to which he refers were deemed parts of the worship of the heavenly bodies, which being placated by certain performances, or words, or suffumigations, granted their worshippers whatever they desired. And, therefore, it followed that, under the principles which we have exhibited, a pretension to astrological or magical powers, and the exercise of the corresponding acts and rites, was equivalent to an avowal of idolatry, and was hence to be capitally punished. And because such acts were very commonly performed by women, the law was careful to specify, "Thou shalt not suffer a *witch* to live;"* and because men are naturally inclined to exercise clemency to women, it was again expressly enjoined, "A man also, *or a woman*, shall be put to death."† Here is particularity of specification with respect to women which, as Maimonides remarks, is not to be found either with regard to the profanation of the Sabbath or any other precept.

There were also many evils which the professors of magical and other such arts believed themselves able to avert through the powers of the heavenly bodies and other idols; among these were the expulsion of noxious animals, the protection of plants from injuries, the prevention of hail, and such like. Now it will be observed, that the evils which these persons professed to avert by their idolatrous arts, are the very evils which are, for the most part, denounced to the Hebrews as the punishments which idolatry would bring upon them.‡

To the prevention of idolatrous associations may also be attributed a variety of small regulations not easily explicable on other grounds. Among these is the prohibition to "round the corners of the head" (i.e. to shave off the hair), or to "mar the corners of the beard;"§ because the priests among the idolaters were thus accustomed to poll and shave themselves. Maimonides alleges that the same reason exists for the precept which forbids the wearing of "garments mingled of linen and woollen," it having been customary for the priests of the idolaters to wear robes of mingled linen and wool, as well as to wear on their finger a ring of mixed metal; and this doubtless with reference to certain planetary or symbolical combinations, which were judged appropriate to the act or object of idolatrous worship. And as also there were acts of worship in which the priests of idols were obliged to wear the dresses of women, and others in which women wore the armour of men, it was comprehensively enjoined in the law that "the woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment."‖

Many of the injunctions or prohibitions which bear on agricultural practices are supposed to be in the same manner levelled at idolatrous or superstitious practices, and designed for the discouragement of idolatry by rendering repugnant to the law some of those acts which it required. By these and similar prohibitions, a large class of idolatrous superstitions were rendered incompatible with the *profession* of obedience to the law; and could therefore only be practised in *open* disobedience to its commands. The good policy of this precaution, with such a people as the Hebrews, is unquestionable. This applies, indeed, to most of the prohibitions which have already been specified, as well as to some which we now proceed to notice.

The law which prohibits the use of the three first years' growth of fruit-trees, may very possibly have arisen from the circumstance that it was usual to offer one half of such first fruits to idols, and to eat the other half in the idol temples: for this reason also, as may be supposed, it was directed that the first fruits allowed to be used—those of the fourth year—were to be eaten before the Lord in the holy place.¶ It appears also to have been very common to perform certain magical rites and sprinklings, with the view of causing the trees to blossom and bear fruit earlier than usual; and this prohibition may seem to have been partly intended to remove all occasion or temptation to such acts—as, of course, it was useless to attempt to accelerate the production of fruit which could not be eaten, especially as the trees in Palestine generally afford fruit naturally by the third year. The grafting one tree upon another of *a different kind* is forbidden in the law,** and apparently for similar reasons, as the

* Exod. xxii. 18. † Lev. xx. 27. ‡ See, for example, Lev. xxvi. 22; Deut. xxxii. 24, xxviii. 33, 39, 40.
§ Lev. xix. 27. ‖ Deut. xxii. 5. ¶ Lev. xix. 23, 25. ** Lev. xix. 19.

act suggested the symbolical accompaniment of most unseemly proceedings, by which, among the ancient pagans, the operation was disgraced and made abominable. On account of this also, it would appear that it was declared unlawful to mingle seeds, or to sow them together;* as well as because the heathen expected some particular benefits to the harvest or the vintage from such admixtures, which always had a symbolical reference.

There are some, indeed, who find in these regulations good rules for agricultural processes and effects. But the Hebrews could learn agriculture without being taught of God or of Moses. And it seems far more likely, and far more in unison with the great objects of the Mosaical law, that these operations were forbidden as common in their nature and design with other rites which the Gentiles believed to possess particular power and influence, and which, in various degrees, belonged to or tended towards idolatry.

On the same grounds the Hebrews were forbidden to cut their persons, as the heathen often did in the transports of their religious excitement, or of their grief: neither were they to mark their bodies with such stigmata as those which the heathen employed superstitiously, or for the purpose of marking themselves as the votaries of particular gods.† And not only were they thus carefully excluded from idolatry and all its circumstances, but they were excluded from having any doings about an idol in the way of business, or to receive anything belonging to an idol into their houses.‡ And the reason is plain:—if a man received an idol, or something belonging to it, even for the purpose of breaking it up, he would be very likely to fall into a snare, if it happened that some good befell him while the "abomination" was in his house, or that he throve well upon the money which the sale of the broken up or melted materials produced.

That their oaths might not be taken in the name of false gods, it was directed that they should swear in the name of the Lord; but false or vain swearing by that great name were strictly interdicted.§ Blasphemy of that holy name was punishable with death,‖ not only as an offence against God, but as an overt act of rebellion and sedition against him in his kingly character. And not only were idolaters, and those who invited to idolatry, individually to be punished with death; but if a town or city turned to strange gods, that town was to be considered as in a state of open rebellion against the authority of the sovereign, and it was the bounden duty of all the people, after careful inquiry, to subject that place to a solemn ban or curse, and utterly to destroy it as an accursed thing.¶

But stringent injunctions and prohibitions offered not the only considerations which were presented to the minds of the Israelites to keep them faithful to the God of their fathers. They were not only informed of the obligations of gratitude and obedience which *all* men owed to him as the Creator and Governor of the world, but were reminded of their peculiar and multiplied obligations by which they were themselves bound to devote themselves to him. They were accordingly commanded to *love* God with all the heart, and mind, and strength; not only as the governor of the universe, and the benefactor in numberless ways of all mankind, but to love him as their own especial deliverer and friend, from whom they had received so many distinguished favours and the promise of others in time to come. And as the result of such gratitude and obedience, they were required to obey his laws, and for this additional reason, that without such obedience they would not merit a continuance of the kindness of God, nor be worthy of receiving further benefits from his hands.**

ii. *Rites and Institutions.*—As our attention now turns to the survey of the rites and institutions which God judged suitable for the Hebrew people—and first, to those which were connected with his worship—we are arrested by a preliminary question of considerable interest, and by which much discussion has first and last been provoked. This is, to what extent the ceremonial observances, and especially the forms and apparatus of divine worship, were similar to those of the Egyptians; and if a similarity existed, whether the Hebrew or the Egyptian system should be charged with imitation of the other?

* Deut. xxii. 9. † Lev. xix. 27, 28. ‡ Deut. vii. 26.
§ Exod. xx. 7, xxiii. 13; Deut. v. 11, vi. 13, x. 20. ‖ Lev. xxii. 11, *et seq.* ¶ Deut. xiii. 12—18.
** Exod. xx. 2; Lev. xi. 45, xxv. 38; Deut. iv. 32—40, v. 24—28, vi. 4, 5, 12, 13, 20—25, vii. 6—11, viii. 1—6, 10—18, ix. 4, 5, x. 12, xi. 1, 13, 14, xxvi. 1—10, xiii. 4, 5, xxxii. 6. Jahn, sect. 137.

That a similarity did exist, in some particulars, was early discovered by those scholars who had made themselves acquainted with as much as could formerly be known (through the reports of Greek and Latin writers) of the Egyptian rites and institutions. Maimonides, although a Jew, and an ardent advocate of the divine origin and anti-idolatrous object of the Mosaical system, notices this similarity, and attributes a designed imitation to that system on grounds which he explains and justifies. The same view has been ably elaborated and sustained by various writers, among which are Sir John Marsham, and, above all, the eminently learned Spencer, in his great work '*De Legibus Hebræorum;*' and after him by Moses Lowman and others.

Another class of Biblical divines seemed to start with pain at the idea of such an imitation, and consider it a point of religious duty to contend for the originality of every pin of the tabernacle, and of every thread in the dress of the high-priest. They have argued either that there was no such similarity in the opposite party alleged, or that, although some similarities may be found, they must be accounted for by the supposition that the Egyptians borrowed from the Hebrews; or that all the analogies which can be discovered were originally derived from patriarchal usages or tradition. On this side occur such names as those of Witsius, Meyer, and, more lately, of Dr. Woodward and Dr. Wait; and it may be observed that the views of the great majority of writers who have occasion to notice the question take this direction.

Now this question has continued to be argued entirely upon its original grounds. The advocates of the alleged imitation have gone on illustrating the arguments of Spencer, or adducing further proofs from eminent writers; and their opponents have proceeded copying Witsius, or following his line of argument and evidence,—both parties appearing to be utterly unconscious of the new sources of evidence which have been opened within the last fifty years, and by which the state of the question has been entirely altered, from one of argument to one of fact. These sources are found in the ancient paintings and sculptures of Egypt, which, as our readers are aware, exhibit, with great minuteness of detail, not only the usages of that extraordinary nation, in peace and in war, but portray all the rites and ceremonies of their religion, with all the acts which were performed, all the utensils which were employed, and all the dresses and ornaments which were worn by the Egyptian priesthood in the services of their gods. Now, with reference to this last class of subjects, it is clear that they must afford ample materials for settling the question as to similarity at least. For one who has made himself acquainted with the minute descriptions of the tabernacle, the utensils of worship, and the priestly attire, which are given in the books of Moses, will easily be able to recognise the resemblances or differences which the Egyptian monuments offer. The result will set the question at rest by establishing, beyond all further dispute, that *very important similarities do exist*, and can be denied by no one without betraying great ignorance of what he ought to know,—we say *ought*, for surely every one ought to seek all attainable evidence on the question which he undertakes to decide.

That the similarity does, to a very considerable extent, exist, is very certain; but how that similarity was produced is another question. We see not, ourselves, how to avoid the conclusion that some Egyptian practices were admitted into the Hebrew ritual.

In the first place, the points in which analogies have been found are too numerous and too peculiar to have been the result of accidental coincidence.

They could not have been derived from the common origin of patriarchal practice; for that had no ritual from which such analogous usages could be transmitted.

Those who suppose that the Egyptians copied the similar practices from the Hebrews, fix upon the time of Joseph's power and popularity, as that when such imitation was most likely to have taken place. But it is forgotten that the Hebrews had then none of those ritual observances for the Egyptians to imitate, nor, indeed, till after they had left Egypt. It would be difficult to assign any subsequent date to the imitation. The Hebrew ritual, as exhibited in the wilderness, was not likely to be well known to the Egyptians; or, if known, was it at all probable that this proud and highly civilized people would imitate the ritual of their escaped

bondsmen, against whom their minds were probably in a state of high exasperation? And, after the Israelites had entered the Promised Land, it was not until the time of Solomon that the Hebrew ritual exhibited a sufficiently imposing appearance to attract the attention of the Egyptians. The intercourse which then existed between the two countries, and the marriage of the Hebrew king to an Egyptian princess, would point to this reign as by far the most favourable date for such an imitation. But then—the sculptures and paintings from which we obtain the knowledge that analogies did actually exist, date much earlier than the time of Solomon—some of them, even earlier than the departure of the Israelites from Egypt. This, as we take it, is conclusive against any imitation of the Hebrew ritual by the Egyptians.

Such an imitation would indeed be most improbable on almost every ground on which it could be considered. The Egyptians were an old nation, long organised in all its institutions, including—we have not the least reason to doubt—its religious institutions and ceremonies, long before the Israelites received their ritual system; and since their hatred and absolute prohibition of innovation and change in all that they had organised has been in all time notorious, the supposed imitation would, *à priori*, be most unlikely, even were their relations with the Israelites equal and amicable, which they certainly were not.

As only visible things were capable of being so represented as to furnish that positive proof of similarity to which we have adverted, we shall not insist upon similarities which do not admit of this degree of proof; although, certainly, since the existence of these establishes the general principle of accommodation, the existence of other instances, not susceptible of the same kind of proof, becomes the more probable, when properly supported by other considerations.

We have now only to state the considerations which may be presumed to have determined that degree of accommodation to Egyptian usages which we shall presently endeavour to substantiate. And in the first instance it may be well to hear Maimonides:—"As at that time the universal practice and the mode of worship in which all were educated was, that various kinds of animals should be offered in the temples in which their idols were placed, and before whom their worshippers were to prostrate themselves and to burn incense; and as there were also certain persons set apart for the service of those temples (which, as has been already shown, were erected in honour of the sun, and moon, and other planetary bodies), therefore that Divine wisdom and providence of God, which so eminently shines forth in all his creatures, did not ordain the abandonment or abolition of all such worship. For it is the well-known disposition of the human heart to cleave to that to which it has been habituated, even in things to which it is not naturally inclined. To have decreed the entire abolition of all such worship would, therefore, have been the same as if a prophet should come and say, 'It is the command of God, that in the day of trouble ye shall not pray, nor fast, nor publicly seek him; but your worship shall be purely mental, and shall consist in meditation, not in action.' On these accounts the Creator retained those modes of worship, but transferred the veneration from created things and shadows to his OWN NAME, and commanded us to direct our religious services to HIMSELF." This learned Jew then goes on to illustrate by examples the view he takes; and this view seems just in itself, while it is amply confirmed by evidence which did not exist, or rather had not been brought to light at the time he wrote.

That, during their sojourn in Egypt, the Israelites had departed very widely from the patriarchal faith, and that the pomps, processions, and imposing ordinances of that country had usurped a powerful influence over their minds, is not only likely in itself, but is demonstrated by the sad affair of the golden calf, and by subsequent manifestations of a tendency towards the idolatries of Egypt. Now the worship of Egypt was full of rites, ceremonies, and apparatus, which, while they were considered as in themselves suitable, were also made symbolical of hidden mysteries, as was the case with the rites of all pagan systems. Now the symbolical or typical nature of the Hebrew ritual is allowed on all hands, and is in the fullest sense admitted by the present writer. Yet we know not that any one has alleged that the heathen borrowed their *symbolizations* from the Jews, although the similarity is as great in this as in any other matter.

Thus the Hebrews, in their defection to the religion of the Egyptians, had necessarily become habituated to a highly ceremonial and symbolical worship, whereby their minds may well be supposed to have been incapacitated from wholly returning to the plain and simple system of their fathers. The apostle Paul manifestly assigns the origin of the law to some defection of this nature. "Wherefore, then, serveth the law?" he asks; and answers, "*It was added because of transgressions.*"*

In this state of the case, and after the people had unequivocally evinced their tendencies by the feast of the golden calf, it seems natural and probable that a ceremonial and symbolical form of worship should be conceded to them—as like as might be, in its mere external forms, to that which they were predisposed to follow—but directed to wholly different objects, and carefully purified from all that might, even in remote tendency, lead to idolatrous or unholy associations and practices. Such a course was in unison with those accommodations to the ideas and prejudices of the people, of which other examples might be produced. We may the less hesitate about this, when we reflect that the law, as a whole, was only intended for a particular people, and for temporary purposes; and we have only a right to expect to find that it was good and suitable for its immediate objects. This made it *the best* under all the circumstances; and a system better *absolutely*—as having larger objects, and as being adapted to all times and all people—would have been unsuitable and bad for the limited purpose of the Mosaical Law. The principle of accommodation and concession in this law is frequently affirmed in the New Testament; and God himself, by one of the later prophets, speaks of its inadequacy for general and final purposes with great force of expression. He says, "I gave them statutes which *were not* [absolutely and generally] *good*, and judgments *whereby they should not* [abidingly] *live*."† Yet so prone has the Christian world generally been to consider the Mosaical Law as something more than *relatively* good, something more than perfectly adapted to a limited object, that this text has been made the subject of numerous elaborate expositions, most of which serve only to demonstrate a great unwillingness to receive the words in the obvious and simple meaning which we have indicated.

Then, under these considerations, regarding the Hebrew ritual as an accommodation to the prejudices and dangers of a people who, as a people, were obviously not prepared to receive moral precepts and religious doctrines apart from the ceremonial observances and symbolical appendages in which the greater part of the world had then agreed to envelope them, we shall see occasion to admire the wisdom with which the system founded on this concession was adapted to their condition and capacities, and was moulded into a safeguard against idolatry, and made an instrument of assisting that separation of this people from all others, which was one of the essential conditions of their existence as the chosen race. The manner in which its circumstances were framed to shadow forth the more broad and spiritual dispensation which was to follow, invested it in some degree with a spiritual character, of which we shall hereafter take some notice. And then, in order to keep the nature of the community constantly in view, all the ceremonial institutions had reference to God, not only as the sovereign of the universe, but as the king of the nation. The Israelites were taught to feel that the tabernacle was not only the temple of JEHOVAH, but the palace of their KING; that the table supplied with wine and shew-bread was the royal table; that the altar was the place where the provisions of the monarch were prepared; that the priests were the royal servants, and were bound to attend not only to sacred but also to secular affairs, and were to receive, as their reward, the first tithes, which the people, as subjects, were led to consider as part of the revenue which was due to God, their immediate sovereign. Other things, of a less prominent and important nature, had reference to the same great end.‡

The engravings, by which the immediately ensuing statements are illustrated, are derived entirely from Egyptian sources. Most of our readers know that the ecclesiastical antiquities of the Hebrews are usually illustrated, not by representations of anything known and real, but by pictures which embody such ideas as the artist is able to form from the descriptions which

* Gal. iii. 19. † Ezek. xx. 25.

‡ Exod. xxv. 8, 9; Lev. xxi. 6, 8, 17; Num. xxviii. 2; Deut. xxiii. 4; compare Ezek. xliv. 7. Jahn, sect. 214.

he reads. Hence they have no antiquarian value; and are indeed little better than mere ornaments to a book, and quite as likely to mislead as to instruct. Feeling this, we were anxious to secure a set of illustrations more real and more instructive; but we saw not clearly how this advantage might be secured, until, happening to turn over the elaborate engravings in the great work on Egypt, we were much struck by some apparent analogies which occurred to us, and by which we were led into the inquiry which has resulted in the conclusions already stated, and in conformity with which we are enabled to offer the corroborations and illustrations which follow. The number of these might have been greatly enlarged; but it has been judged proper to reserve a portion for the illustration of Solomon's Temple. These engravings illustrate not only *analogies* but *differences*, for reasons which will appear; and, altogether, we trust they will be found to explain, and show the reason for many very precise regulations and directions in the Law, which generally create little interest in the Christian reader.

The part of our subject which now lies before us may be conveniently comprehended under the heads of

1. Sacred Persons. 2. Sacred Places. 3. Sacred Things. 4. Sacred Times. 5. Sacred Acts.

I. Sacred Persons.

1. The Jewish nation may, in one point of view, be regarded in a sacred character, or as a holy people. As the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, set apart to preserve and transmit the true religion, they were, as a body, consecrated to God, and on this ground are often called "holy," and were considered to sustain the relation of priests to the Lord, and as being entitled to be called a sacerdotal nation or a nation of priests.* This holiness of the Jewish nation—as understood in its proper application to their separation and consecration to the worship of the true God—was continued, or perpetual, even though, as often happened, there existed, at times, great moral corruptions. Nevertheless, they were constantly exhorted to maintain a purity of life and conduct, corresponding with their calling and the title which they bore; and as they were called a holy people, so to be the professors of holiness.†

2. The Levites.—Under the patriarchal system of worship, the first-born was entitled to exercise the functions of a priest. This indicates the peculiar propriety with which God demanded the appropriation to Himself of the first-born in Israel, although the immediate occasion was offered by the destruction of all the first-born of Egypt, while those of Israel were preserved, in memory of which the Lord required that the first-born, thus distinguished, should be set apart for Himself. Afterwards, however, the whole tribe of Levi was taken in lieu of the first-born, by a solemn act of substitution. On that occasion it was found that the number of the first-born exceeded the Levites by no more than 273. The character assigned to the tribe was two-fold:—1. As servants or ministers of God in the public ordinances of religion. 2. As his servants in a civil or political capacity, that is, his servants or officers, as King or ruler of the state. It is in the former only of these relations that we shall now attend to them.

From this tribe (of Levi) Aaron and his posterity were consecrated for the priesthood, to whom a nearer access was given to the throne of God in the Holy of Holies. The rest of the Levites performed religious duties of an inferior kind: but for the more menial employments, bringing water, splitting wood, they were allowed servants, who were assigned for the labours of the sanctuary.

The high-priest sustained the highest office in the tribe, being regarded as the head both of the priests and Levites. Separate duties were allotted to all of them,—to the menial servants, the Levites, the priests, and the high priest; and the duties of one were not allowed to interfere with those of another.

1. *Servants*.—These did not belong to the Levitical tribe, nor were necessarily Israelites. They had their origin as a separate class of the community, from a religious practice among the Hebrews of devoting by a vow themselves, a son, or a servant, to services of such a kind. It was in reference to this practice that the law recorded, in Lev. xxvii. 1—8, was enacted,

* Exod. xix. 6; Lev. xi. 44, 45, xix. 2, xx. 26; Deut. vii. 6, xiv. 2, 21, xxvi. 19, xxviii. 9.

† Exod. xx. 26, &c.; Lev. xi. 45, xix. 2, xx. 7, 8, 26.



[" Hewers of Wood."]

[Water Carriers.]

and which fixed the price at which a person who had thus devoted himself might be redeemed. As the price of redemption was low, and might be reduced by the priest to suit the circumstances of the party, it is probable that the alternative thus offered was generally taken, as Joshua found it expedient or necessary to appropriate the services of the Gibeonites as "hewers of wood and drawers of water."* The number of these servants was greatly increased in the times of David and Solomon; and after the captivity they became a very considerable part of the population, and were called (by an honorary name that was anciently applied to the Levites) Nethinims, a word which signifies *given*, or *devoted*, that is, to the service of the temple and sanctuary.† This employment, however it may have been originally regarded, was in later times considered highly respectable.

2. *The Levites.*—The solemn ceremonial with which the Levites and their posterity were set apart to the service of God, the priests and the tabernacle, is fully described in Num. viii. 5—22. After this, it became their duty to render such assistance to the priests as might be required. They kept guard around the tabernacle, and subsequently around the temple. In the journey through the wilderness, it was their duty to transport the different parts of the tabernacle, and the different sacred utensils that belonged to it; to see that both the tabernacle and temple were kept clean; and to prepare the supplies of wine, oil, &c., for the sanctuary. They had the care of the sacred revenues; and, subsequently to the time of David, were required to sing in the temple, and to play upon instruments. In the more recent times they slew the victims for the altar; for the people generally, having for a time discontinued it, had become unskilful in the performance of this service. By the original appointment of Moses, their regular period of service seems to have been from thirty to fifty years of age; but as in another place he dates their admission at twenty-five years, it has been concluded that they served five years in the lighter duties of the office, before they were admitted to the more laborious and responsible services. But it does not appear that they were at fifty exonerated from all further service; for although they were exempted from all laborious employment, they remained with those more actively employed, and continued probably in discharge of the easier occupations, and instructed the young Levites in the duties of their office.‡

When the Israelites were settled in Palestine, and the tabernacle was no longer carried about from place to place, as it had been, the service of the Levites underwent much change and became considerably lighter; in consequence of which, David, in re-organizing their body for the service of the temple, fixed the commencement of their service at the earlier age of twenty years.§

The Levites were divided into three distinct families, in consequence of, and according to, their descent, from the three sons of Levi, namely, Kohath, Gershon, and Merari. These families had distinct parts of the tabernacle and of its furniture during the march through the desert.

The new organization which they received, and the new duties which devolved upon them when the temple was erected, will be noticed in the proper place; and their very important civil position will engage our attention under the next general head of Government.

The Levites were not enjoined to wear any particular dress. But we learn that those who removed the ark in the time of David, as well as those who were singers and musicians in Solomon's temple, were arrayed in white robes.‖

3. *Priests.*—From among the Levites the family of Aaron was chosen to act as priests to minister at God's altar, and to fill that important place in the theocratical government which will hereafter require suitable notice. It illustrates the nobly disinterested character of Moses, that, although he had sons of his own, he was content to see them remain undistinguished as simple Levites, while the family of his brother received this high and permanent distinction. Aaron had, at the time of this appointment, four sons, Nadab, Abihu, Eleazer and Ithamar, who, together with their father, were consecrated to the priesthood. Not long after, the two

* Josh. ix. 23—27. † Num. iii. 9, viii. 17, 19, xviii. 6.
‡ Num. iii. 1—36, iv. 1, 30—35, 42, 46—49, viii. 23—26. § 1 Chron. xxiii. 24—27; 2 Chron. xxxi. 17; Ezra iii. 8.
‖ 1 Chron. xv. 27; 2 Chron. v. 12.

first were destroyed, as already related (p. 206), for offering strange fire before the Lord; and there remained only Eleazer and Ithamar, in whose posterity the family of Aaron was distinguished into two branches, which ultimately formed a numerous body.

The manner of their original consecration is fully described in Exod. xxix. and Lev. viii. and need not here be repeated. Moses officiated on that great occasion. Aaron was inaugurated as high-priest with the same ceremonies as his sons, with the addition that he was arrayed in his official robes, and the sacred oil poured upon his head, whence he is distinguished as *the anointed.** Eight days were occupied in the various ceremonies whereby the priestly caste was for ever set apart from the other Israelites, so that there was subsequently no need for the further consecration of themselves or their posterity.†

It has been disputed whether the ceremonies of consecration were practised at the accession of every high-priest to his office. The texts cited below‡ seem to favour the affirmative. The ointment or oil with which the high-priest was anointed is described; and there is a receipt for making it in Exod. xxx. 23—25.

Not only a descent from Aaron, but a freedom from all bodily defects, was requisite to qualify a person for the sacerdotal office.§ The Jewish writers enumerate a hundred circumstances, any one of which excluded a person of sacerdotal race from the priestly ministrations. Such as were thus incapacitated from the higher services of the priesthood were employed in cleaning the wood that was to be used for the altar; for great nicety was exercised in the choice of this wood, as it was thought unlawful to use any that was in the least degree rotten or worm-eaten. Moses gave no direction as to the employment of such persons, but directed that they should enjoy a full participation in the secular privileges of the priesthood.

There are several regulations tending to enforce the personal purity of the priests and the purity of their race. They were forbidden to contract ceremonial defilement,‖ and thereby render themselves unfit for the discharge of their duties, by contact with the dead; but with great indulgence to human feeling, they were allowed to contract defilement on account of a father, mother, son, daughter, brother, or unmarried sister. Even for these, however, they were forbidden to manifest the usual Oriental tokens of violent grief by making baldness on their heads, or mutilating their beards, or cutting their flesh, or rending their clothes.



[1. Egyptian Priestesses.††]

Their women also were to be examples of purity. A priest might not marry a woman who had ever been unchaste, nor one who had been divorced. Whether he might marry a widow or not has been disputed; but the probability is that he might marry the widow of another priest.¶ If the daughter of a priest was guilty of unchastity, she was to be burned;** whereas the law provided no punishment for the unchastity of an *unaffianced* female in ordinary life.

* Lev. iv. 3, 5, 16, vi. 15; Psa. cxxxiii. 2. † Exod. xxix. 35—37; Lev. x. 7; compare Acts xiii. 2, 3; Rom. i. 1.
‡ Exod. xxix. 29; Lev. xvi. 32, xxi. 10; Num. xxi. 26—28, xxxv. 25. § Lev. xxi. 16—24.
‖ The Rabbins understand that the priest contracted defilement if he approached within four cubits of a dead body, or entered the house where it lay, or followed it to the grave, or discharged any act of mourning.
¶ Compare Lev. xxi. 13, and Ezek. xliv. 22.
** Probably her body, after being stoned to death. Burning *alive* does not seem to have been a Hebrew punishment.
†† See also the cut at the head of this chapter, in which Egyptian women are represented engaged in their customary services in the Egyptian worship. That cut is not literally *copied* from Egyptian sculptures and paintings, but has been carefully *composed* from them for the purpose of general illustration.

These regulations about the women of the priests deserve the more attention from the fact that the wives and daughters of the priests were not employed in sacred ministrations, as among the Egyptians, and in other heathen nations; and it is very possible that this severe punishment was designed effectually to prevent the way being opened for transferring into the worship of the true God the abominable rites of the heathen, who often worshipped their gods by unseemly acts, and made brothels of their groves and sacred places. The reality of this and similar dangers is manifested by the actual profanation of the temple in this fashion, under the wicked reign of king Manasseh.*

The priests were also forbidden to drink wine or any intoxicating liquor when they were to exercise their sacred functions; and this is supposed to have been occasioned by the fate of Nadab and Abihu, whose error is concluded to have been occasioned by drunkenness.

As high functionaries in the court of the Great King, many of the duties of the priests were of a civil nature. Those which more properly belonged to them in their sacerdotal character were to pronounce the benediction upon the people,† and to conduct the whole service of the holy place. Theirs was the business of sacrificing, with all its rites, in all offerings upon the altar of burnt-offerings. The government and ordering of the sanctuary and of the house of God lay upon them. They kept the table of shew-bread properly supplied; they attended to the lamps of the golden candelabrum every morning; and at the same time they burnt the *daily* incense, that any offensive scent from the dressing of the lamps might not be discerned. It was their duty to keep up the fire upon the brazen altar, that the fire originally kindled from heaven might never be extinguished. It was their office to make the holy anointing oil. And they blew the silver trumpets at the solemn feasts, and also before the ark at its removals.

While they were few, there was enough occupation to employ them all; but when they had become numerous, they were divided into twenty-four bands, or courses, each of which undertook weekly, in rotation, the sacred services. But this regulation belongs to the time of David.

The priests ministered at the altar and in the holy place with covered heads and naked feet, like the priests of Egypt; but these indeed have ever been, throughout the East, circumstances of respect. Their services were, in most respects, the same as those of the Egyptian priests, as, indeed, necessarily resulted from the fact, that the Lord required from them most of the observances which they had learned to regard as acts of becoming worship, but always took care to draw the line distinctly between the good and the evil, the use and the abuse. They were hence also required to be as scrupulously clean as the Egyptian priests; they were to bathe themselves with water daily, before they commenced their ministrations; before their original consecration they were also ordered to shave their persons completely, but it does not appear that they were required to keep themselves thus constantly shaven, like the priests of Egypt. Indeed, we know that they wore beards, which the latter never did: but although they were forbidden to shave their heads, they were not allowed to appear with long hair at the time of their ministrations, and the high-priest, whose presence was always necessary, was not allowed to let his hair grow at all, but had it cut close, once every week.‡

In ordinary life, when not engaged in their sacred duties, the priests were dressed like other Israelites of good condition; but, like the priests of Egypt, they had a peculiar dress, appropriated to their sacred ministrations. This dress was kept in the wardrobe of the tabernacle,

* 2 Kings xxiii. 7; Lev. x. 9.

† "The Lord bless thee and keep thee; The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace," Num. vi. 24—26. In practice, the priest whose duty it happened to be, stood so as to be seen by all the people, and pronounced the blessing with outspread and uplifted hands, and his face turned towards the congregation. See this attitude below in cut 5.

‡ Compare Lev. xxi. 5, and Ezek. xliv. 20. We are inclined to suspect that the reason why, although their hair was kept short, it was not shaven, was that they might not be induced to wear wigs, &c., like the Egyptians, which might with other circumstances have suggested or tended to the use of such symbolical masks, representing the heads of beasts, birds, &c., as were on some occasions worn in their ministrations by the priests of Egypt. The retention of the beard would also be an obstacle to this.

and was put on by the priests before they commenced their actual duties, and afterwards returned to the wardrobe.*

As the priestly dresses of all kinds are abundantly represented in the sculptures and paintings of ancient Egypt, they afford a favourable opportunity for testing the opinion that a certain degree of assimilation to Egyptian forms of service was tolerated by the law, and also of detecting such differences as suggest a reason for the minute directions concerning dresses which are given—namely, to exclude matters that were objectionable, as being idolatrously symbolical, or as tending to idolatry or superstition, by preventing everything from being used which was not described. The Hebrews were at this time acquainted with no other forms of ritual worship, no other priestly institutions and attire, than those of Egypt, which were so calculated to strike, and did strike, their imaginations deeply; and there can be no doubt that if left to themselves in the establishment of their ritual, they would have followed the Egyptian model, their tendency to which continued for a long time to be very strong. We shall now be able partly to see with what wisdom this tendency was met, and limited, and guided, by their new ritual being adapted, so far as it might with usefulness or safety, to the notions they had imbibed. We may easily believe that if this had not been done—if they had been confined to a system more simple and austere, when all the world had fallen into pompous ceremonials—the probabilities of their being drawn aside into idolatry would have been increased beyond calculation. In more ways than one did God deal with the Israelites as a parent deals with his child.



[2. Egyptian Priests.]

The dresses of the Egyptian priests were various, according to the god they served and the office they exercised. In Israel there were but two dresses, that of the priests and that of the

* Exod. xxviii. 4—43; Ezek. xliii. 14, xliv. 19. The Jewish writers speak much concerning the priestly robes, but with particular reference to the temple, where doubtless the usages in this matter were the same as in the tabernacle. We learn from them that a priest could not officiate without his robes, evidently to preclude him from wearing any other, with superstitious or idolatrous symbols, neither could he wear this beyond the sacred precincts. When the priests arrived to take their turns of duty, they put off their usual dress, washed themselves in water, and put on the holy garments. While they were in the temple, attending upon their service, they could not sleep in their sacred habit, but in their own wearing clothes: these they put off in the morning, when they went to their service, and, after bathing, resumed their official dress.

high-priest. We shall see whether, among the dresses of the former, we cannot illustrate or explain the latter. The description of the priestly dress which is given in Exod. xviii. is rather defective, probably from most of the articles being then so well known as to need no particular description. It is, however, partly assisted by the notices in Ezekiel, who, from the comparison, manifestly describes such raiment as the priests of the first temple actually wore. Josephus may assist in some points of difficulty, but he is to be resorted to with caution. He was a priest himself, and could well describe what was worn in his time, and was then understood to have been prescribed by Moses; but it is possible that some of the particulars may have been of later introduction.

In the first place, it is to be observed that all the priestly garments were to be of linen. No wool was to form or enter into the texture of the garments in which they ministered. Cleanliness was assigned as the reason for this.* This was exactly the Egyptian practice. The priests of that country were of all people the most studious of personal cleanliness. They wore linen robes; and although their outer garment, when dressed in their ordinary attire, was, as among the other people, a kind of woollen mantle, they were obliged to throw it off before they entered a temple.† Neither might any person be buried in woollen, nor, in fact, are any mummies found enveloped in other than linen or cotton. The dress of the Hebrew priests consisted of four articles :—

1. *Drawers of linen.*—This piece of dress was fastened round the loins, and descended so as to cover the thighs,‡ reaching to the knees, as the Jewish writers understand. The decency of their service was given as the express reason for this, and Maimonides suspects there may have been some view to the prevention of such obscenities as attended the worship of Baal-Peor. Now such drawers were commonly worn in Egypt. The sculptures and paintings of that country constantly present us with figures of workmen and servants who have no other article of dress than a kind of short kilt or apron, sometimes simply bound about the loins and lapping over in front. Others have short and loose drawers; and a third kind, fitting closely and reaching to the knees, appears in the figures of some idols—as in that which we have annexed. All these were worn by the priest, in common with other persons of the upper classes, under their other robes. This last sort seems to have been peculiar to the gods and the priests, whose attire was often adapted to that of the idols they worshipped. There was this difference, that in Israel drawers seem to have been peculiar to the priests; whereas they were, of their different kinds, worn by all classes in Egypt.



[3.—Drawers and Girdle.]

2. *The tunic.*—This is called a *coat* in our version. It is scarcely more than named by Moses. We must, therefore, resort to the Jewish writers, who describe it as a long robe, fastened at the neck, and reaching to the ancles, with sleeves reaching to the wrist. This description answers very well to the priestly tunics which are shown in some of the figures we have had engraved, excepting that the full sleeves do not reach below the elbow; and considering the sort of duties the priests had to perform, particularly in attending to the fire of the altar, and in preparing the victims for sacrifice, we may be inclined to doubt the information which tells us that their sleeves reached to the wrist. Indeed, the Egyptian priests in some of their ministrations, found it so convenient to have the upper part of their persons free, that they wore an ample robe or

* Exod. xxviii. 39, 40, 43, xxxix. 27—29; compare Ezek. xliv. 17.

† Herodotus, ii. 37, 81; see also Plutarch, de Is. et Osir. 4.

‡ Exod. xxviii. 42; Lev. vi. 10; Ezek. xliv. 18.

skirt, bound round the waist, and descending over the apron to the ancles, and also sustained by a strap which crossed the breast from the shoulders; and occasionally the priest who offered libations and incense * wore a long full garment, reaching from below the arms to the feet, supported over the neck by straps.†

3. *The girdle.*—This is briefly described by Moses as "a girdle of fine linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and needlework;" ‡ by which we are to understand that it was embroidered in these various colours with the needle. The supplementary description of Josephus and of Maimonides differ considerably; but as the former was the older writer, and ought, as a priest, to know best, we prefer his statement. According to him § it was a hand's breadth in width, woven in such a manner as to exhibit the appearance of a serpent's scales, and was ornamented with various flowers, embroidered with the colours mentioned. It was worn a little below the breast, encircled the body twice, and was tied in a knot before. The extremities of the girdle hung down nearly to the ancle; and the priest, when engaged in some of his sacred services, flung the ends over his left shoulder, that he might not be impeded by them.

For this article of priestly attire we perceive that we have not provided all the illustration it is capable of receiving from the antiquities of Egypt. There is, however, sufficient to show that some classes of the Egyptian priesthood wore girdles of the form and in the fashion described. For examples, hanging down in the manner described, we may refer to the cuts marked 7 and 14: the former of these is also a specimen of one richly embroidered; and if any stress is to be laid on the imbricated appearance of the girdle which Josephus mentions, that may be seen very strikingly in cut 3. The annexed figure of a priestly scribe offers a clear and interesting example of both tunic and girdle. In other examples the girdle has greater length.


[4.—Girdle and Tunic.]

4. *The mitre*, or *turban.*—This head-dress of the priests, called a "bonnet" in our version, will best be described in connection with that of the high-priest, for the sake of showing the difference between them.

The High-Priest.—The political functions of the high-priest, as, so to speak, Vizier of the Great King, formed a very important part of his character; but in this place our attention is confined to his sacerdotal office.

The high-priest was so important a personage among the Israelites, that the changes and modifications of the office will come under our notice historically, and need not in this place occupy our attention. According to the law, the office of high-priest was made hereditary in the eldest branch of the family of Aaron, when the person who legally stood next in the succession laboured under none of the disqualifications which the Law specifies. The office was also to be held for life. The circumstance under which, first the one, and ultimately the other of these regulations was nullified, it belongs to the History to relate.

The high-priest was under the same restrictions as the other priests, and under some which were peculiar to himself. It appears that the common priests might marry widows; but the high-priest could marry none but a virgin. He could not marry even the widow of his childless brother, although this was an imperative obligation on all other Israelites.|| He was not allowed to manifest any external signs of sorrow for the dead, not even for those near relatives whom the common priests were allowed to mourn.¶ The usual acts of mourning

* See figures 2, 3, of Cut 2.

† Ibid. fig. 4: the robe which covers the priest from neck to heels at fig. 5, Cut 2, is seen only in *processions;* and this may, perhaps, be the woollen cloak already mentioned, since that was only laid aside in entering temples.

‡ Exod. xxviii. 29.

§ Antiq. iii. 7.

|| Deut. xxi. 7—15. The Jewish writers also inform us that, in practice, he was allowed no more than one wife. But there was nothing to prevent him from marrying again when his wife died.

¶ Deut. x. 6.

were such as would have disqualified him, ceremonially, for duties which no one had power to discharge for him; and hence the necessity for this restriction. Besides, it was the obvious object of many of the distinctive regulations to which he was subject, to keep constantly before the mind of this great personage, and before the minds of the people, that he was the priest of God, and, as such, solemnly separated by peculiar duties and obligations from all other men.

The sacerdotal duties of the high-priest were such as required his daily presence at the sanctuary. He might perform himself, with the assistance of the priests, those duties in sacrifices and offerings, and benedictions, which have just been ascribed to the priests—being such as they *might* execute without his active participation. But it was his great and peculiar privilege, that the most solemn acts of service could be performed by him only. He was, in some sort, the mediator between God and the people,—to appease the divine anger, and make atonement for the sins of the whole nation. In exercise of this office, he alone was privileged to enter the most holy place,—to burn incense, and sprinkle the blood of the sacrifices before the mercy-seat. This was only once in the year,—on that great day called the Day of Atonement, of which we shall speak in another place. The sacrifices were on this day offered by the high-priest with his own hand; and, altogether, he had more employment on this than in any other day of the year, or perhaps than on all the rest put together. His daily duty was to offer, at his own charges, the "meat-offering" [of cakes made with oil and fine flour], morning and evening, upon the altar.* This was quite distinct from the daily [animal] burnt-offering, which the common priests might, and usually did, offer. It was also the duty of the high-priest to take the counsel of God, on occasions of importance or difficulty, by *Urim and Thummim*, which, however, was rather a political duty, as chief minister of the Great King, than a sacerdotal one.

These, and the other duties resulting from his civil position, and the superintendence and direction of the affairs of the sanctuary, so much engaged the time of the high-priest as to render him, perhaps, the most occupied person in the Hebrew commonwealth.

Now, we can treat of his dress on the same principles as those on which the raiment of the common priests has been described.

On the great Day of Atonement he wore a dress entirely of white linen, and very similar to that of the common priests—probably as his employments were more arduous and active than on any other, and seemed to require a lighter dress.

His official dress as high-priest consisted of the following articles:—

1. *Drawers.*—The same as the priests.

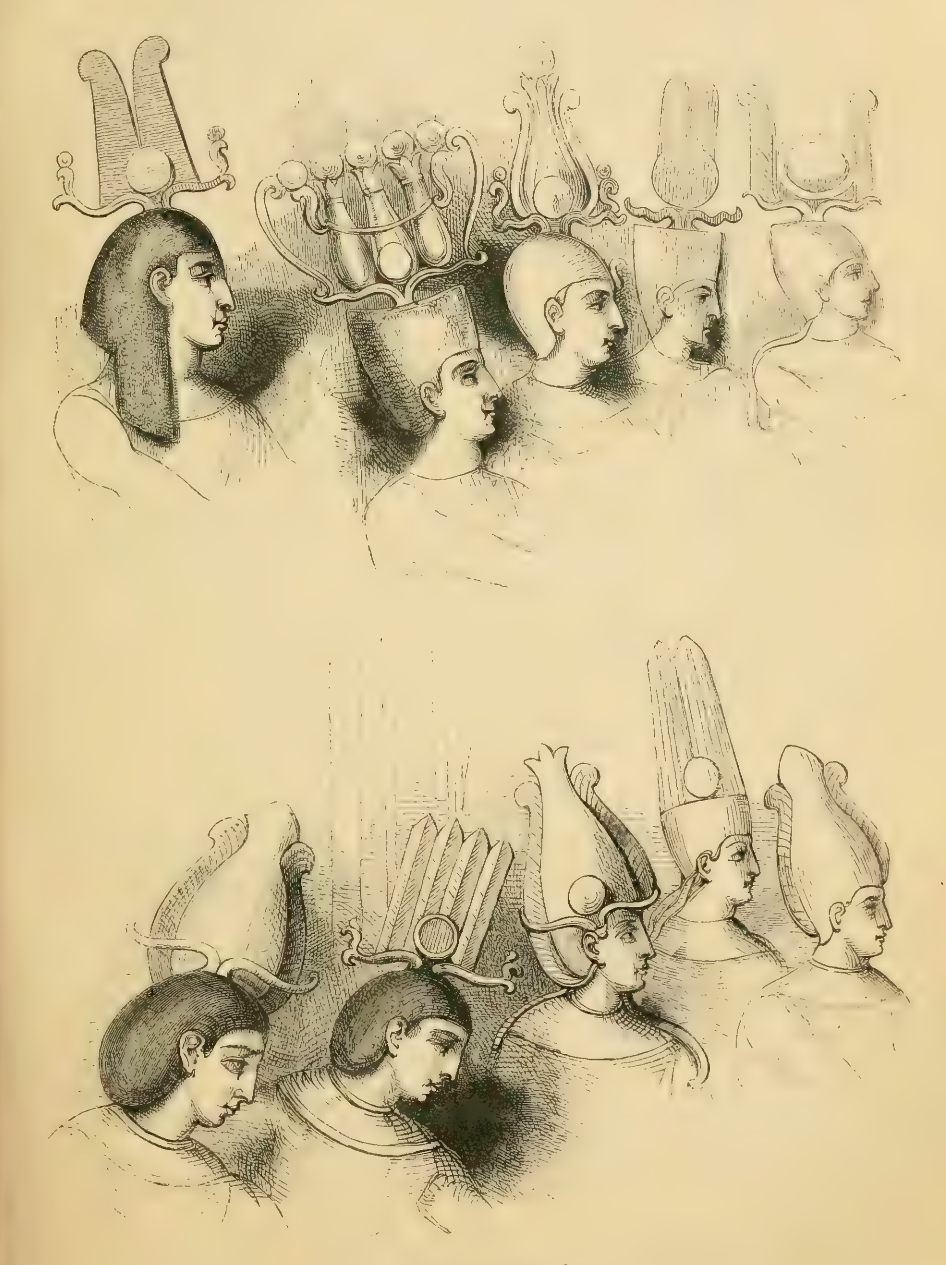
2. *Tunic.*—This, also, is commonly said to have been the same as that worn by the other priests; but we doubt it: for, first, the tunic which the priests wore was *their* outer garment, whereas the tunic of the high-priest was *his* inner garment. The first was likely to be loose, as we have regarded it, and the latter close. Besides, the names by which they are described are different; and the term which describes the *inner* tunic of the high-priest denotes an inferior quality to that which denotes the outer garment of the priest. We observe that, when the Egyptian priests are represented with more than one robe, the inner one is often a close shirt with short, or sometimes long, sleeves; and to this the inner robe of the high-priest seems to answer.†

3. *The Bonnet*, or *Mitre.*—This article must have been understood from the terms which were employed to denote it, as the Law gives no account of its form or appearance, but merely mentions that it was to be of linen. We must, therefore, resort to the account given by Josephus, who first describes the mitre of the common priest, and then adds what was peculiar to that of the high-priest. "Upon his head he [the ordinary priest] wears a cap not brought to a conical form, nor including the entire head, but still including more than the half of it. It is called a mitre, but its make is such that it resembles a crown. It is made of thick swathes; but the contexture is of linen, and it is folded round many times, and sewed together, besides which a piece of fine linen covers the whole cap from the upper

* Lev. vi. 19—23.

† This shirt is not much shown in the cuts we have introduced.

part, and reaches down to the forehead, and conceals the seams of the swathes, which would otherwise appear unseemly. This adheres closely to the head, that it may not fall off during the sacred service." A little farther on, he adds,—"The high-priest's tiara, or mitre, was like that of the other priests, only it had another of purple, or violet colour, above, and a crown of gold of three rows about that, and terminating above in a golden cup, about the size of the joint of the little finger." To the untravelled reader, that may suggest the idea of a turban, to which biblical writers are in the habit of referring for a comparison; but to one who knows that there is no sewing, no seam in a turban, nor any



[5. Egyptian Mitres.]

envelope as described, it will not suggest that comparison; but may be rather supposed to denote the construction of a stiff cap, formed by bands of linen wound over and sewed on another, and the whole made to present a smooth and even appearance.

In this point of view it may appear to have been similar in general purpose and make to the head-cap, divested of the superior ornaments, in the annexed engravings (5); but it is hard to say which of them it may have most resembled in shape. It was not *conical;* and this stipulation concerning the priest's bonnet, as distinguished from the mitre of the high-priest, doubtless indicates *that* to have been conical. The predominance of the conical form in the Egyptian mitres is shown by our cut. We do not imagine that the mitre of the Jewish high-priest *was like* any of these. They were too much charged with the emblems and symbols of false gods to remain unaltered. But we think they show that the Hebrew mitre was something of the same kind, with the same arrangement of parts, and equally imposing. Here is first the cap for the head; then, above that, another cap, or towering ornament, of different colour, often of a conical shape, terminating sometimes in a cup or calyx. This is supported by a golden border, generally representing horns, and generally ornamented with a figure of the sun. Both these were idolatrous symbols, the one of the moon and the other of the sun. The golden crown, of which Josephus speaks, appears to have been of late introduction. But we may see that the Egyptian symbols, denoting the idolatrous appropriation, were very markedly displaced by the plate of gold which the law directed to be tied, with a blue lace, in front of the mitre, bearing the appropriative words, קדש ליהוה, HOLINESS TO JEHOVAH. Although, therefore, we think that the mitre cannot be identified with any of our specimens, it was a head-dress much of the same class, and not differing more from those of the Egyptian priests than these differed from one another.

4. *The Mantle*, or, as it is called in our version, "the robe of the ephod," was worn over the inner tunic or shirt. Except in colour and ornaments, it seems to have differed little from a robe of the same name worn by the more wealthy of the laity. This of the high-priest was of sky blue. At the top, surrounding the neck, it had a strong binding of woven-work, that it might not be rent, and the bottom had a kind of border or fringe, composed of tassels made of blue, purple, and scarlet, in the form of pomegranates, interspersed with small bells of gold, which gave a tinkling sound when the wearer moved.*

The further descriptions of Josephus and other Jewish writers would intimate that it was without sleeves, having a hole or slit on each side to put the arms through.† He adds, that it reached to the feet, contrary to the usual pictures, which, for the sake of showing the under tunic [which appears to us to have been a plain skirt], make it come but little below the knees. The description agrees, in general terms, with the general character of the Egyptian outer robes represented in our cuts. It is true they have all sleeves; but if we are to insist, from Josephus, that the mantle had no sleeves, then we may mention that there are instances at Thebes of priests wearing over the shirt a loose robe which is sleeveless, and which exposes the sleeves of the inner tunic. To us the descriptions suggest the notion of an *abba*, an outer article of dress common among the Arabs of Syria and Arabia,‡ and is also, after them, much used by the townspeople. This is frequently represented in our illustrations from modern Oriental sources. Josephus also describes it as all of one piece, like our Saviour's robe,§ which is another characteristic of the *abba*. We will not, therefore, contend that this was an Egyptian article of priestly dress. The Hebrews may have worn something of the sort before and after in ordinary life.



[6. Egyptian Tunic.]

* Exod. xxviii. 31—34.
† Antiq. iii. 7.
‡ But not among those of Egypt and Barbary, who use the large folding *burnous*.
§ John xix. 23.

But if they had something answering to the *abba*, so had the Egyptians; and it happens that the robe which exhibits this correspondence (6) agrees better with the description than does the *abba* now in use. It has, for instance, a deep fringe, which the *abba* wants.

And here we may observe that the fringe of bells and pomegranates was obviously intended as a priestly substitute for the fringe bound with blue ribbon which all the Israelites were enjoined to wear. Now of this fringe we may remark, that there are many traces of it among the dresses represented in the Egyptian remains. These fringes were only the ends of the threads composing the woof, left to prevent the threads from unravelling. The blue ribbon which the Hebrews were directed to add would, of course, strengthen it, and prevent it from rending.*

5. *The Ephod.*—Another peculiar portion of the official dress of the high-priest was the ephod. This was a very rich and splendid piece of dress, and is also one of those which is the most particularly described, although more with reference to its materials than to its form.† It was a kind of brocade, made of *byssus* and gold thread interwoven, and adorned (in figures of some kind, probably) with scarlet, purple, and blue. The accounts given of it by different writers, even among the Jews, vary greatly. Josephus, who, of course, knew what was worn in his time, calls it a short coat, and gives it sleeves, which no other authority assigns to it. Jerome compares it to the short Roman cloak called caracalla, but without the hood. Calmet makes it to have been a sort of sash. The more general account, however, supposes that it was, at least, originally, without sleeves, and consisted of two pieces, of which that behind reached from the shoulders, downward, to below the buttocks [others, nearly to the feet], while the front part descended quite or nearly to the loins. If this description might be relied on, the dress would, in its general purpose and proportion of descent before and behind, answer to, and probably be intended to supersede, the leopard-skin, which, as shown in cut 7, was sometimes worn by the highest order of Egyptian priests when engaged in the most important functions of their service. But while we are thus prepared to meet this alternative, if any, on rabbinical authority, and insist on this form of the ephod, we are ourselves more disposed to complete, from Josephus, the brief indications of the text, and then, we apprehend the result will offer something very like that curt and very splendid outer robe, which, as shown in cut 8, and in that which has been placed at the head of this chapter, was worn by priests of the highest rank, when discharging their most sacred functions. It was worn even by the sovereign when engaged, as high-priest, in offering sacrifice or incense to the gods. It has the merit also of providing explanations which have been found in no other form of the ephod which has



[7. Ephod and Girdle.]



[8. Ephod and Censer.]

* This is the obvious secondary effect. The primary reason assigned, that on looking at this fringe the Lord's commandments might be remembered, has so little apparent connection, that it cannot be explained without supposing that the Egyptians, or others who used the fringe, connected some superstitious ideas with it.

† Exod. xxviii. 9—12.

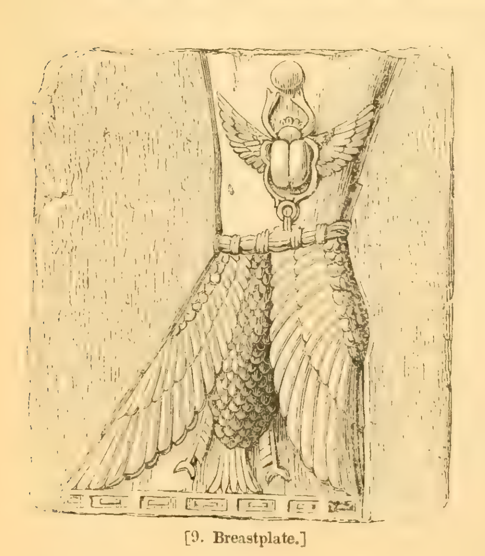
been suggested. This is in the "shoulder-pieces,"* the use of which commentators have been sorely perplexed to make compatible with the form they assign to the ephod. According to our proposed illustration, it is not only explicable, but *necessary*. It is seen that the robe as represented is properly a rich skirt or apron, varying in length, but generally reaching from below the paps to the knees. In this form it must have had some support, in the shape of straps or braces to prevent it from slipping down. Now this support it actually received, either in straps passing over the shoulders (as in fig. 4 of cut 2; see also cut 3), when the priest wore no collar; but when a collar was worn there were straps connecting the collar with the ephod, which thus obtained the requisite support. Here, then, we have the shoulder-pieces, which have occasioned so much difficulty, and which, in the dress of the Jewish high-priest, bore, immediately on the shoulders, two onyx stones, set in gold, on which were engraved the names of the twelve tribes, six on each stone, in the order of their birth.† In its immediate use, this ornament, perhaps, served as a button to connect the strap behind with the strap before [for there seems to have been no collar], or else to cover the point where this junction was there made by other means.

The prohibition of idolatrous and superstitious images and figures must greatly have modified the appearance of this article of ceremonial dress; for, in the Egyptian specimens, we see it highly charged with all kinds of idolatrous figures and symbols, and even with scenes of human immolation.

6. *The curious girdle of the ephod* was of the same substance as the ephod itself,‡ doubtless corresponded to that rich and narrow girdle which passes round the ephod, at the loins, in the Egyptian examples which we offer.

7. *The Breastplate.*—This splendid ornament consisted of a piece of the rich brocade of the ephod. It was a span square when doubled, which it was, to strengthen it to bear the precious stones which were set in it. These stones were twelve, of as many different kinds, each bearing the name of one of the tribe of Israel. They were arranged in four rows, of three in each row. This magnificent piece of jewelled work was worn upon the breast, over the ephod. It had at each corner a gold ring, from the two uppermost of which went two golden chains of wreathed work, to connect it with the shoulder-pieces of the ephod, while, from the rings below, similar chains joined it to the girdle of the ephod.

In this we see an adaptation and correction of an Egyptian custom, under which the higher Egyptian priests wore a large and splendid ornament upon the breast. It was generally an idolatrous symbol—often a winged scarabæus—the emblem of the sun, as in the annexed example, in which we even see the connecting ring and chain, although only, in this instance, to fasten it to the girdle.



[9. Breastplate.]

8. *The Urim and Thummim*, by means of which the high-priest obtained responses from God was certainly either connected or identical with the breastplate, and, on account of it, that ornament itself was sometimes called *the breastplate of judgment*. Some writers, whose authority is now much followed, think that the urim and thummim § was merely *a sacred lot*, afforded by three precious stones contained in a purse or bag, formed by the lining or interior of the breastplate. According to this conjecture, on one of the stones was engraven כן, *yes;*

* "It shall have the two shoulder-pieces thereof joined at the two edges thereof, and so it shall be joined together," Exod. xxviii. 7.

† Exod. xxviii. 9, 10.

‡ Exod. xxviii. 8.

§ אורים ותמים, *light and truth*, or *justice*. Sept. *δήλωσις καὶ ἀλήθεια*.

on the other לא, *no ;* the third being destitute of any inscription ; and that the question was to be proposed in such a form that an affirmative or negative answer might suffice. Then the answer was determined by the stone which the high-priest drew forth, the blank stone intimating that no answer was to be given. This seems better than the dreams of the rabbins, who teach that the answer was conveyed by the supernatural irradiation or development of such of the letters graven on the breastplate [contained in the names of the twelve tribes] as were needed to spell out the answer. According to this, it follows that the *urim and thummim* was no other than the breastplate itself, and, although the subject is one of considerable difficulty, we are rather disposed to concur in that opinion. But the notion as to the manner in which the response was given by this breastplate appears to us the most awkward and improbable contrivance that can be imagined. It seems more likely, and much more seemly, that the breastplate merely *qualified* the high-priest to seek and to receive an answer when he presented himself, wearing it, before the inner veil of the tabernacle, and that then the answer was conveyed to him in an audible voice, from the mercy-seat, beyond the veil. This agrees also with the frequent notice of the response as being from " the *mouth* of the Lord."

Anything analogous to the urim and thummim, whichever interpretation be taken, few readers would expect to derive from the ancient usages of Egypt. But it happens that the illustration which the old writers on the subject were in the habit of most frequently adducing is found in this. On account of the difference of purpose, we are, upon the whole, inclined to lay less stress upon this instance than upon some others which we have now ourselves first produced, from newly-opened sources ; but it is, however, too remarkable to be overlooked.

" When a case was brought for trial," says Sir J. G. Wilkinson, " it was customary for the arch-judge to put a golden chain around his neck, to which was suspended a small figure of Truth, ornamented with precious stones. This was, in fact, a representation of the goddess who was worshipped under the double character of truth and justice, and whose name, Thmei,* appears to have been the origin of the Hebrew thummim,† a word, according to the Septuagint translation, implying truth,‡ and bearing a further analogy in its plural termination.§ And what makes it more remarkable is, that the chief priest of the Jews, who, before the election of a king, was also the judge of the nation, was alone entitled to wear this honorary badge; and the thummim of the Hebrews, like the Egyptian figure, was studded with precious stones."

This is certainly a remarkable set of coincidences ; but it ought to be stated, that although the Jewish high-priest was a judge, he did not wear his breastplate in his judicial capacity, in which capacity alone the arch-judge of the Egyptians wore his badge of truth and justice.

The Scripture affords no instance in which the Lord was consulted by urim and thummim later than the time of David.

II.—SACRED PLACES.

1. *Altars*, *Groves*, *Stones of Memorial.*—These are mentioned in such a way as to intimate that some degree of sanctity was attached to them ; and they may all be traced back to the earliest times. The first men doubtless believed in that grand truth, which ONE greater than Moses inculcated in a later age—" God is a spirit ; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Believing this,—that this Divine Spirit filled all things, and was equally present in all parts of His creation, they could have no sacred places, but worshipped God wherever and whenever their hearts were drawn forth towards Him, in veneration, gratitude, or love. Those who do not—and who does?—disbelieve the influence which

* " The Egyptian or Coptic name of justice or truth. Hence the θεμις of the Greeks."

† " Lord Prudhoe has very ingeniously suggested that the *urim* is derived from the two asps or basilisks, *urei*, which were the emblems of royalty in Egypt. Ouro is the Egyptian word implying a king."

‡ Exod. xxviii. 20.

§ " The goddess frequently occurs in the sculptures in the double capacity, represented by two figures exactly similar."—Sir J. G. Wilkinson gives these figures in his ' Ancient Egyptians,' Nos. 83, 84.

circumstances may exercise upon the mind—solemnizing, softening, or abasing man in his own eyes,—and in the same degree magnifying the loving-kindness and greatness of God,—will find no difficulty in understanding that such drawings forth of the soul were most frequently experienced upon the mountain-tops, and under the shade of groves, which last is, in eastern climes, especially gratifying and solemnizing, by virtue of the more marked contrast with the consuming heat and bold garish light of the open plains. Therefore men did most frequently worship upon the tops of mountains and in groves; and when they had altars, there they built them; and when, from any circumstance, an altar had been built in some other situation, for reasons of much mark and interest to him who built it, it was not unfrequent for him to plant around it the grove which nature had not given. There are examples of all this in the patriarchal history; and it was all very proper and reasonable. It was also natural that, in process of time, a degree of peculiar sacredness should be attached to those places where men habitually rendered worship to God, and sought his favour with sacrifices and offerings; and this not, as we take it, so much because the man himself rendered there his devotional services, as because such services might be supposed to draw the Divine regard with more especial favour and acceptance to that spot—especially when that spot had once or oftener been distinguished by some sensible evidence of the Divine presence. In fact, it would not be easy to say that any place was counted sacred by the patriarchs except those places where the Lord had appeared to them; and the sanctity attached to the place seems to have been in proportion to the frequency or signal character of such manifestation. We see this very pointedly in the origin of the sacred character of the place near Luz, where Jacob rested on his journey to Mesopotamia. He saw there a vision of God and his angels, and, when he awoke, his exclamation developed the operation and character of those ideas to which we are ascribing the origin of sacredness, as applied to one place more than to another. "Surely the Lord is in this place," he cried, "and I knew it not!" And he was afraid, and said, "How dreadful is this place! This is none other but *the house of* God, and this is the gate of heaven." And he set up a stone as a pillar,* and anointed it—to mark the place as sanctified, and he vowed that if he were spared to return, at a future day, to his father's house in peace, that the stone which he had set up for a pillar should be "*God's house.*" By this he did not mean that he would there build a house for the services of God. This was very far from his idea: he had no house himself, nor did his habits lead him to think of houses: but he meant that he would regard it as a place where God manifested his peculiar presence, and which was therefore eminently suitable for a place of worship and offering.

Thus, then, we see that any degree of sacredness which was, in the most ancient times, ascribed to places, was not owing to the acts of worship performed there, but to the supposed consequences of these acts, as drawing the Divine complacency to the spots in which they were habitually performed. Or, again, the sacredness of a spot resulted from the spontaneous manifestation of the Divine presence—as frequently in the Lord's appearances to the patriarchs—*in consequence* of which the spot was regarded as peculiarly honoured, and hence suitable for appropriation to acts of worship and thanksgiving, and was set apart as such by altars, or by erected stones, or by planted groves, or by any two of these, or by all three. Thus, every way, it was nothing less or more than the peculiar presence of the Divinity, which was deemed to give its sanctity to the places which were in any degree accounted holy.

But in process of time, as men sank into idolatry, the use of worshipping on high places and in groves, and even at altars, became abominable. Practices, innocent in themselves, or even suitable, became defiled by unholy use, and could be no longer tolerated. Hence, as the worship in groves and on high places admitted of no *formal* modification, the practices were utterly forbidden to the Israelites. On high places *they* might not build their altars; nor were they to form plantations, or to have trees in or around the places where they worshipped God; that the rites of his worship might be openly displayed to the light of day, and that no obscure and gloomy shades might tempt to such obscene and horrid rites as those by which

* We do not here enlarge on this subject of memorial stones, as we design to give it a more full consideration than would be suitable in this place.

the heathen polluted their sacred groves. Altars, although they had become instruments of idolatry and superstition, were required for sacrifice, and admitted of formal change. Hence, worship at altars was not abolished; but the altar was divested of the idolatrous characteristics which it had acquired; and its neutral character, as an instrument of ritual service, was guarded by strong and comprehensive regulations, by which all the circumstances of idolatry were carefully excluded.

It was not until men had localized, and humanized, and broken up the original idea of God —so as to bring it within the compass of their own narrow apprehensions *—that they thought of building their God *a house*, for it was as *a house* in which the presence of the worshipped Deity might rest, that the ancient temples and tabernacles were regarded—not as places for the shelter of assembled worshippers (like our churches), for the worshippers assembled not in the temples, but in the courts before or around them; nor yet as places where the sacrifices might more conveniently be offered—for sacrifices were offered, not *in* the temples, but in the courts before them.

Now, when men thought of building palaces for their gods, they necessarily gave them such palaces as agreed with their own condition and mode of life. A nomade people must have a moveable temple; and among a tent-dwelling people that temple must be a tent, or portable fabric of wood. An immoveable temple we can only expect to find among settled nations; and when a moving people becomes settled, and exchange their tents for houses, in like manner their moveable tabernacles become fixed temples. The reflection of King David, after the workmen of King Hiram had built him a palace, bears strongly on this statement,— "See now," he said, "I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains."† And, therefore, he proposed that the house of God should no longer be a tent, but a fabric of stone, in accordance with the altered circumstances of the people.

II. *The Tabernacle.*—Temples certainly existed in Egypt, and, very possibly, in Palestine, before the date of the exode. It is, however, evident that the Israelites were not in a condition to erect a temple until they were settled in the promised land; and if, therefore, they were, during their sojournings, to have any analogous fabric, it must needs be such as they could transfer from one place to another. This was the renowned Tabernacle.

The considerations which we have stated will bear against the notion that a fabric of this description—a portable temple—was never before known. The opinion as to the absolute originality of this fabric, and that which belonged to it, might in former times be safely entertained, but, in the present comparatively advanced state of our information, is no longer tenable. We believe, most truly, that the tabernacle was made according to the model or "pattern" shown to Moses in the mount. The exhibition of such a model was necessary, that he might learn what parts of analogous fabrics ought to be avoided, and what might safely be adopted; but it does not, therefore, follow that this fabric was to be unlike anything that had previously been seen.

We quite relinquish the illustrations of similarity which have been adduced by previous writers—and forego the support which might seem to be offered by Amos v. 26, and Acts vii. 43, which describe the Israelites as bearing idol tabernacles in the wilderness; because we think that they were not such tabernacles as that to which our attention is now turned, but rather shrines borne about entire, such as we meet with in all idolatrous nations, and which generally contained an image or symbol of the god. It is, however, wrong to say there was nothing like it—and that the tabernacle was the only fabric which had to be taken to pieces, in order to be removed, and the only one which was not merely a tent (allowing these were sacred tents), but a wooden frame-work, covered with skins and cloths. Having shown how natural it was that there should be sacred tents among a nomade people, we may now mention that at this day, among a people to whom, least of all, any communication with the Jews can

* We touch but lightly on these matters here, and merely for the sake of the connection, as the general subject has already engaged our attention in a preceding page.

† 2 Sam. vii. 2.

be traced, namely, the eastern Tartars, the sacred tabernacles are, like their own dwellings, made of a frame-work of wood, with a covering of felt, the whole being taken to pieces when removed.* Here, then, we have an intimation that such a fabric is proper to a nomade people who support any form of religious service. The tabernacle could not be of Egyptian origin, for the Egyptians already had temples of stone. But this tabernacle had little in common with those in use among the nomades, save in its adaptation for removal, and in its frame-work of wood, and its coverings. Its general form, and the distribution of its parts, is similar to that of an Egyptian temple. This we can show in due time.

It will be seen that we are disposed to regard the tabernacle (and afterwards the temple) as like the other parts of the ritual—an accommodation, or rather an appropriation, to right objects—of ideas which then prevailed in the world, and with which the minds of the Israelites were thoroughly saturated. The heathen boasted of the presence of their gods among them in their temples and tabernacles; and as, perhaps, the Hebrews could not, more than they, take in the idea of God's universal presence, or derive from it the satisfaction which the notion of his peculiar local presence was calculated to afford, He condescended to give them in the Shechinah, or miraculous light, a manifest and unquestionable symbol of His presence with them; and since the service rendered to him was to be of a ritual nature, he directed that a suitable abode should be prepared for this presence. There he would keep the state of a court, as supreme civil magistrate and king of Israel; from thence he would issue his laws and commandments as from an oracle; and to that place, where their King abode, and where their God manifested his presence, they were, as to their *kebla*, to turn their faces in all their service and their worship. The east, the point of sun-rising, was the *kebla* of those who worshipped the host of heaven; and it is probably for this reason that the front of the tabernacle and temple fronted the east, so that those who worshipped God, in his courts, must needs turn their faces to the *west*.†

The Tabernacle may now be briefly described.

First there was the area or court, which enclosed and contained what must properly be regarded as the tabernacle. It was a hundred cubits (about 150 feet) long by 50 cubits (about 75 feet) broad. It was surrounded on all sides, to the height of five cubits, with curtains made of fine white twined linen. They were suspended from rods of silver, which reached from one column to another, and rested on them. The columns on the east and west were ten, on the north and south twenty in number. They are said ‡ to have been of brass, which probably means that they were of wood overlaid with that metal, as the chapiters were with silver. The columns, that they might not be injured by the moisture of the earth, were supported on bases of brass. Near the top of the columns were silver hooks, in which the rods that sustained the curtains were inserted.

That part of the tabernacle which formed the entrance was twenty cubits in extent, and was on its eastern side. The entrance was closed by letting fall a sort of tapestry, which hung from rods or poles resting on four columns, and which was adorned with figures in blue, purple, and scarlet. When the entrance was opened the tapestry was drawn up by cords.

The fabric properly called the Tabernacle was situated in the middle of the western end of this court. It was covered in every part, and presented the form of an oblong square, thirty cubits long from east to west, ten broad from north to south, and ten in height. A structure of these dimensions could not make a very imposing appearance. Whatever glory, *as a fabric*, it possessed was owing to the costly materials of which it was formed. It was suitable for its purpose, and was magnificent for the time and place; but those over-zealous writers know little about ancient temples who affirm, "No heathen temple could be compared

* See 'Voyages chez les Peuples Kalmucks et les Tartares,' Berne, 1792; and 'Calmuc Tartary,' by H. A. Zwick and J. G. Schill. London, 1831.

† We have been astonished to see this stated as a difference from Egyptian practice. It is, in fact, an agreement. Most of the temples front the east, like the tabernacle and Solomon's temple. But it may be doubted that the Egyptians had any general kebla, as the direction of their temples is not uniform.

‡ Exod. xxvii. 10.

with the Temple of Solomon, *or even the tabernacle* of Moses, erected in the wilderness, designed only for temporary use, and portable."*

The walls of this fabric were composed of forty-eight boards, or planks; namely, twenty on the north side, twenty on the south side, and six on the west. The two at the angles were doubled, making the forty-eight.† The eastern side was not boarded. The boards, like all the other timber-work of the structure and its utensils were of "shittim wood," which denotes, not some rare and costly wood, as used to be taken for granted, but the wood of the black acacia, which still grows abundantly in the valleys of Sinai. These boards were ten cubits long, one and a half broad, and overlaid with plates of gold. They rested on bases of silver, and were united by bars, or poles, also of gold.

The tabernacle thus constructed was protected by four coverings, curtains, or carpets, thrown one over the other, which hung down on the side nearly to the silver foundation. The first, or rather interior or lower covering, was made of "fine twined linen," and was richly embroidered with figures of cherubim, in shades of blue, purple, and scarlet. It is probable that the right side of this covering was laid undermost so as to form a beautiful ceiling to the interior of the tabernacle. This reached down to within a cubit of the earth. The covering next above this was of woven goats' hair, and reached very nearly to the ground.‡ The third covering was of "rams' skins dyed red," forming, it may be presumed, a kind of morocco leather; and the outermost covering, intended to fence the rest from the weather, was made of the skins of the *tachash*, a word of uncertain meaning, which some consider to denote a colour (sky-blue), others a sea-animal: that it was a badger, as our own and other versions render, seems most unlikely, that animal being unclean to the Jews.

The eastern or entrance side of the tabernacle had no boards, but was closed by a fine embroidered curtain, hung upon five pillars of shittim-wood overlaid with gold. Josephus says that there was another curtain over this which came down to the ground, and was to protect it from the weather; and that this outer curtain was drawn aside on the sabbaths and other festivals.§

The interior of the tabernacle was divided into two rooms by a curtain or veil, which hung down from four pillars overlaid with gold. This veil was made of the richest stuff, both for matter and workmanship, and was adorned with figures of cherubim and other ornaments curiously embroidered upon it. This was called the inner veil. The first room, or antechamber, was twenty cubits long by ten broad; and, consequently, the other was but ten cubits square. The first was called the Holy,‖ or the sanctuary; and the small inner chamber, the Holy of Holies,¶ or the Most Holy, and sometimes the Inner Tabernacle.

Remembering that the temple of Solomon was on the same general plan as the tabernacle, it may be better to reserve the analogies to an Egyptian temple which they offer in common, confining our present notice to a few prominent resemblances.

In both the tabernacle and the Egyptian temple, the area was an oblong square, the front portion of which was occupied by a court or courts, where the worshippers attended, and where sacrifice was offered. The sacred apartments in both were at the remoter extremity, the Most Holy being the smallest and the innermost. Into these sacred chambers, among both the Hebrews and Egyptians, none but priests were admitted, being, as we have shown, not intended for the worship of the people, but for the residence of the god, and for the performance of such services as only his high and chosen servants were entitled to render. The walls of the Egyptian temples were covered within and without with relievo or intaglio sculpture, the former generally painted in brilliant colours. And it seems a singular coincidence that the

* See a Dissertation on the 'Originality of the Institutions of Moses,' prefixed to Dr. Townley's translation of the *More Nevochim*. The contents are stated to be taken from an American publication with the same title, and from Dr. Wait's Sermons. This treatise is so full, from beginning to end, of erroneous statements (of facts), that its admission into a very useful book is much to be lamented, and the oversight might have proved injurious to a reputation, for learning and information, less firmly and worthily established than that of Dr. Townley.

† Exod. xxvi. 15—30. ‡ Exod. xxvi. 7—13. § Antiq. iii. 6, 11.

‖ קדש ¶ קדש קדשים

most splendid hangings of the tabernacle—being the veils and the inner curtain which, within, formed the ceiling, and covered the plated boards outside—was wrought with figures of cherubim. It is possible that, in this and in other instances, the pre-occupation by the figures of cherubim was designed to prevent the introduction of such idolatrous scenes and symbols as the Egyptians were wont to exhibit on the walls of their temples.

We have already exhibited the idea of the tabernacle as partly that of a palace for the king. This will seem perfectly clear to any one who carefully compares the terms in which the tabernacle and even the temple are compared and referred to throughout the Scriptures. We are convinced that this view is essential to the right understanding of these structures and the things which belonged to them. This has also been the opinion of the Jews themselves, who are certainly not disposed to underrate or desecrate the fabrics, the mere memory of which is, to this day, their glory and their pride. It was therefore with surprise and regret that, a few years back, in the heat of a biblical controversy, we saw this idea scouted as a profane thing by some good and useful men, our respect for whom could not prevent us from seeing that they knew not of what they spoke. It is partly for this reason that we have desired to bring more strongly and distinctly before our readers a view which it might otherwise have only seemed necessary to assume or indicate.

Now, then, if the tabernacle were the king's palace, it is reasonable to carry out the analogy, and regard the utensils which belonged to it as the palace furniture; and the priests as its servants and officers. This view is so clearly developed by R. Shem Tob, in his comment on Maimonides, that we shall take his statement as an introduction to the account we have now to give of the sacred utensils.

"God, to whom be praise, commanded a house to be built for him resembling a royal palace. In a royal palace are to be found all the things that we have mentioned. There are some persons who guard the palace; others who execute offices belonging to the royal dignity, who furnish the banquets, and do other necessary services for the monarch; others who daily entertain him with music, both vocal and instrumental. In a royal palace there is a place appointed for the preparation of victuals, and another [nearer the Presence] where perfumes are burned.

"In the palace of a king there is also a table, and an apartment exclusively appropriated to himself, which no one ever enters, except him who is next in authority, or those whom he regards with the greatest affection. In like manner it was the will of God to have all these in his house, that he might not in anything give place to the kings of the earth. For He is a great king, not indeed in want of these things: but hence it is easy to see the reason of the daily provisions given to the priests and Levites, being what every monarch is accustomed to allow his servants. And all these things were intended to instruct the people that the Lord of Hosts was present among us, 'For he is a great king, and to be feared by all the nations.'" *

These analogies will be the more apparent when it is remembered that the comparisons are to be referred to an Oriental rather than a European palace.

1. *The Ark.*—The ark and that which belonged to it formed the sole contents of the Most Holy place, and therefore claims our first attention.

The ark itself was a sort of chest, two cubits and a half long, one and a half broad. It was made of shittim wood, but plated over with gold within and without, and richly ornamented with curious workmanship. It was enriched at the upper edge with a border or rim of gold; and on each of the two sides, at equal distances from the top, there were rings or staples of gold, in which were placed the staves of shittim wood overlaid with gold, by which the ark was to be carried from place to place. These staves were never removed from the ark; but when it was at rest, they were drawn somewhat forward, so that while the ark stood at the wall of the Most Holy place, the ends of the staves touched the curtain which divided that from the outer room.†

* R. Shem Tob, cited by Outram, on Sacrifices, i. 3.

† Exod. xxv. 10—15, xxxvii. 1—5.

2. *The Mercy Seat* was formed by the covering of the ark, with which its length and breadth coincided; but the height, or thickness, is not known. This was to be regarded as the *throne* of God, the seat whereon his presence rested, and from which the will was to be made known; and there is therefore strong and beautiful significance in the name—the *Mercy* Seat—which is given to it.*

3. *The Cherubim* were figures over or upon the mercy seat. The form, size, and position of these figures have equally been disputed, and are equally inexplicable, unless we are allowed to resort to the analogies offered by the antiquities of Egypt. They were of pure beaten gold; but it has been questioned whether they were of chased work or in statuary. If the description be carefully considered, however, the latter, which is the most general opinion, will seem the most probable. Then, since they are described as having wings, and their wings are said, when stretched forth, to cover the mercy seat, of which we know the dimensions, their bodies were probably in proportion, and in that case the figures could not have been of considerable size. As their faces are said "to be towards one another, and towards the mercy seat," it may seem that they stood erect upon the cover of the ark, at the opposite ends, with their faces towards each other, and both of them with their heads somewhat inclined towards the ark. The form of these winged figures is a question of greater difficulty; and we cannot stay, in this place, to give it the consideration and illustration, from various sources, which it requires, and which we hope in a future page to give to it. It suffices now to mention that it was between these winged figures, over the mercy seat, that the Shechinah, or miraculous light, used to appear as a visible token of the special presence of God. Hence God is said "to dwell between the cherubim,"† and "to sit between the cherubim;"‡ whence the ark itself was in some sense regarded as his footstool, before which the people are called to worship.§

In the ark were deposited the two tables of stone, on which were inscribed the fundamental laws as contained in the ten commandments.‖ And as these tables were called "the tables of testimony,"¶ the ark itself, from containing them, was sometimes called "the ark of the testimony."**

A quantity of MANNA was laid up beside the ark, in a vase of gold, to form a memorial to all generations of the miraculous manner in which the Hebrew host was fed in the wilderness;†† also the rod of Aaron.

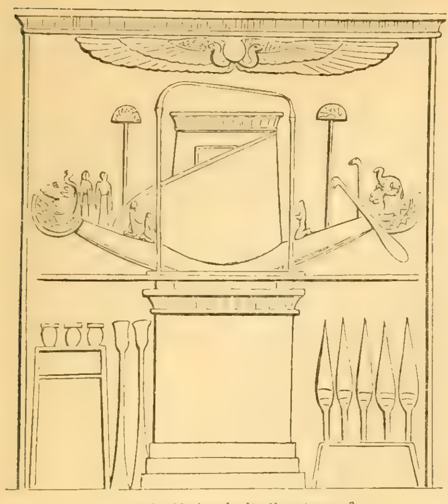
We are now prepared to show that the kind of assimilation, which we have described, to the Egyptian forms of the utensils of ritual service, so far as these forms were innocent, or might be rendered useful, was not excluded even from the most sacred parts of the Hebrew ritual—not even from the Holy of Holies. And if this be so, how much less in things of smaller consequence.

In the *adytum*, or small inner chamber of the Egyptian temples—answering to the most holy place of the Hebrew tabernacle—were placed the peculiar symbols, images, or signs of the god to whom the temple was dedicated. In the case of some of the principal of the gods, those which were the most ancient and the most generally worshipped, the contents of the sanctuary were closely similar, if not identical, with those of the most holy place of the tabernacle,—with the omission, in the latter, of the superfluities and idolatrous appendages which the former offered. While, therefore, the sculptures of Egypt, in which some of these ancient sanctuaries are represented, afford the only discoverable materials for making out the outline forms and some of the details of the ark, and that which belonged to it, we shall at the same time become aware of the simplifying and expurgatory process by which these things were fitted for the use of the Hebrew people.

Our further observations must take the form of a commentary on the cuts which we now produce, and on which we rely for the proof of the statements we have made.

* Exod. xxv. 17—21, xxvi. 34, xxxvii. 6. † Psal. lxxx. 1. ‡ Psal. xcix. 1.
§ Psal. xcix. 5. ‖ Exod. xxv. 16; 1 Kings, viii. 9. ¶ Exod. xxxi. 18.
** Exod. xxx. 6. †† Exod. xvi. 32—34.

In this very striking engraving the shrine (10) is represented at rest upon the ark in the sanctuary of the temple. The anomalous feature is the boat, which, in this and most of the other examples, rests immediately upon the ark, and supports the covered shrine. To explain this, it should be observed that some of the Egyptian gods were carried across, or up or down, the Nile, in splendid boats, on particular festivals, and were sometimes thus absent several days from their temples. From this circumstance, the shrine of such gods was usually represented as in a boat, and in that form was carried about in land processions. There was nothing of this in the Hebrew tabernacle; and as most of the idolatrous symbols are connected with the boat, we at once see what a great difference this omission must have produced. Having given this dispensing explanation concerning the boat, the reader must *suppose* its omission in this and the subsequent illustrations. Supposing, then, the boat omitted, we have first the ark, or sacred chest, on which, as on a pedestal, the shrine is placed. The Egyptian arks are very similar to one another in their form, which, as nearly as can be imagined, correspond to the description of the Hebrew ark; but their proportions are varied. That in the above engraving has not the proportions of the Hebrew ark, being higher than it is long; but we can show others which more exactly agree.



[10. Shrine in its Sanctuary.]

The diameter of the shrine which is upon the ark, as in the mercy-seat which was upon the tabernacle ark, coincides at its base with that of the ark, but diminishes as it ascends. It happens that we do not know how high the covering of the ark rose. Josephus says it was a hand's breadth. We do not suppose it rose like this shrine, because it would have been without purpose in the tabernacle. It contained the image, or some peculiarly sacred symbols of the god, which were thus *enthroned* upon the ark. But in the tabernacle, the ark was the throne of the Shechinah, or radiant symbol of the Divine presence, and an enclosing shrine for *that* would have been absurd. It is evident that the Shechinah gloriously filled the place in the Hebrew tabernacle upon the ark which an enshrined image occupied in the Egyptian temples. Thus the Hebrews were effectually prevented from placing an image there, and, in fact, they never did; for although, in the end, they went so far as to place idols in the sanctuary, they never dared to place an idol in the place thus miraculously preoccupied.

The over-shadowing wings afford an accompaniment similar in kind to that of the cherubim in the Hebrew tabernacle. In this case it is a solar symbol; and although we have no precise knowledge of the form of the Hebrew cherubim, it does not appear to us that they resembled, in form or position, *this*. It is interesting, however, to learn that winged symbolical figures of some kind or other are invariably found in the Egyptian sanctuaries.

Before leaving this engraving the reader will not fail to notice that the poles by which the shrines were carried in processions were left remaining in it when at rest in its place, as was the case with the Hebrew ark. The figures placed beside the ark in this engraving, under the poles, may indicate the manner in which the pot of manna and other articles were "laid up beside the ark" in the Hebrew sanctuary.

We introduce cut (11) for the sake of showing that we have rightly interpreted the shrine which we see placed upon the Egyptian arks, as containing an idol. Here the shrine is uncovered, and the god is revealed. From the attitude, the god appears to be Harpo-

crates. In this instance the shrine is very rich and elegant, and its canopy exhibits a duplication of the winged symbol to which we have already directed attention.

Cut 12 is the form of the ark, which seems to us to agree, as nearly as possible, in its shape and proportions, with that which the book of Exodus describes. Even the staves are similarly placed, and

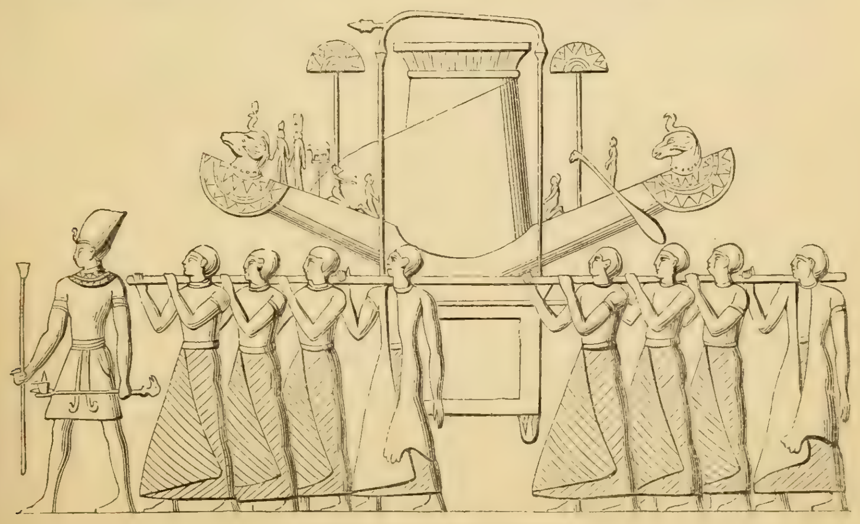


[11. Shrine with Idol.]



[12. Ark borne by Priests.]

the covering is about a hand's breadth in height or thickness. We omit, of course, the image upon it, symbolizing the Nile, and the hieroglyphics on its side. We must, however, call attention to the two small figures which stand at the opposite extremities of the ark. They occupy the place usually assigned to the cherubim in all the pictures of the Hebrew ark, as indeed the text seems to require,* and the hindermost of them takes the very attitude which the more current pictures and descriptions supply. Their faces, however, are not turned to each other, and they are mere human figures without wings. The value of the illustration is, therefore, in this—that, besides the proper idol, image, or symbol, it was usual among the Egyptians to place small figures upon the ark in significant attitudes.



[13. Shrine and Ark borne by Priests.]

* Two cherubim of gold .... in (or *at*) the two ends of the mercy-seat," Exod. v. 18.

When the Hebrew ark was removed from its place, it was not taken into parts, but the chest itself, the mercy-seat, and the cherubim were carried together as one piece, precisely as they had stood in the sanctuary. The preceding engraving (13) shows the same practice among the Egyptians. Here we again see small figures in postures of adoration.



[14. Shrine carried in Procession.]

The present cut (14), however, shows that, in some cases, the shrine was taken off from the ark, and carried separately by the Egyptians. But we have introduced it chiefly on account of the winged figures which it exhibits, and more particularly of those which are represented on the side of the shrine, which certainly offer the most remarkable approximations in form, posture, and place to the Hebrew cherubim that has ever been produced. Let it be observed that the usual representations of the cherubim are taken from the description which Ezekiel (ch. i.) gives of those which he saw in his vision, as compared with the slight intimations supplied by Moses. Now, Ezekiel describes them as having human shapes, with four faces, and four wings. The four faces are those of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle (or hawk); but few writers suppose that the ark-cherubim had more than one of these faces, and they generally take that of a man or an ox, seldom choosing the lion or the eagle. In this Egyptian example we have one of the four faces—that of the hawk. The wings are precisely the same as described by Ezekiel,—" Their wings were stretched *upward;* two wings of every one were joined one to another, and two covered their bodies." So it is here: each figure is intended to be represented with four wings, two of which fall down and cover the body, while the other two stretch upward, both pairs of wings in each of the figures nearly meeting those of the one opposite. Their position, indeed, with their faces towards each other, is strikingly illustrative.

The two last cuts also show the manner in which the Egyptian shrine was carried by the priests on their shoulders, as the ark was by the Levites. The tabernacle itself was removed in waggons; and, in like manner, although the Egyptians had wheel-carriages in great abundance and variety, the shrine or ark was never removed but on the shoulders of the priests.

Having thus surveyed the contents of the small apartment called the Holy of Holies, let us now turn our attention to the furniture of the large outer room, called simply the Holy Place.

This consisted of the golden candlestick, or candelabrum, the table of shew-bread, and the altar of incense. The golden candlestick was placed towards the south side of the apartment; the table of shew-bread opposite to it, on the north side, and the altar of incense stood

between them, but rather in advance towards the curtain which separated this from the most holy place.

1. *The Golden Candlestick* was a truly magnificent piece of furniture, its entire weight amounting to not less than a talent, or 125 pounds of gold, and would therefore be worth about 6000*l*. at the present time. It stood upon a base, from which the principal stem arose perpendicularly, on each side of which three branches were projected upward in such a way as to describe a curved line. These branches arose at equal distances from the main stem, and to the same height with it. Its entire height, according to the Jewish writers, was five feet, and the whole breadth, or distance between the two exterior branches, three feet and a half. The main stem, as well as the branches, was adorned with knobs, flowers, and other ornaments. The whole was of gold.

The utensils in the second temple were doubtless made after the model of those in the first temple and the tabernacle. Those therefore which the Romans were able to preserve when the temple was destroyed, and which are represented on the triumphal arch of the conqueror, may be taken to give the real forms as described by Moses. From this source, however, we only obtain figures of the golden candlestick, the table of shew-bread, and the silver trumpets, as shown in the annexed engraving.



[Bas-relief from the Arch of Titus]

The seven extremities of the main stem and branches supported as many lamps. With the forms of those lamps we are not acquainted ; but they probably did not much differ from the known and usual forms, specimens of which are given in the annexed engraving. All these lamps were kept burning at night, but only three of them by day. It will be recollected there were no windows to the tabernacle. The priest every morning trimmed the lamps with the golden snuffers and tongs ; and removed the filth that might have gathered on them, in golden vessels made for the purpose.*

2. *The Table of Shew-bread* was made of acacia (shittim) wood, overlaid with gold. The description is illustrated by the figure in the Roman sculpture, which agrees with it.

This table was two cubits long, one broad, and one and a half high. Its top, or leaf, was encircled by a border or rim of gold. The frame of the table immediately below the leaf was encircled with a piece of wood, about four inches broad, round the edge of which there was a rim or border, as around the leaf. A little lower down, four rings of gold were fastened to

* Exod. xxv. 31—40, xxvii. 20, xxx. 8, xxxvii. 17—24; Lev. xxiv. 1—4; Num. iv. 9; Joseph. Antiq., iii. 8, 3. The Jewish writers tell us that the robes of the priests, when soiled or worn, were disposed of by being unravelled to form wicks for the sacred lamps, and that no other wicks were employed.

the legs of the table, to receive the golden staves by which it was to be carried when removed. This we do not see in the sculpture, because the rings and staves were not provided in the table made for the temple, as it was then no longer intended to be removed.*



[Egyptian Lamps.]

Twelve unleavened cakes, sprinkled with frankincense,† remained always upon this table. They were placed in two piles, one above another, and were changed every sabbath-day. The stale bread which was then removed belonged to the priests, by whom alone it might, legally, be eaten. This bread was called the *shew-bread*, or more properly the *presence-bread*,‡ because it was displayed before the presence or throne of Jehovah; *the ordered bread*, or bread arranged in order; and also, *the perpetual bread*, because the table was never without it. Wine also was placed upon the table in bowls, some large and some small; also in covered vessels, and in cups, being such different vessels, probably, as were used for wine at the tables of royal personages.§ This table of shew-bread has often been pointed out as one of the marked peculiarities of the Hebrew ritual. But nothing can be more incorrect than this assertion; for numerous examples of such a table, very similar in shape and proportion, occur in nearly all the representations of Egyptian sanctuaries. But there was only bread and wine on the Hebrew table; while those of the Egyptian temples were in many instances (not in all) heaped with meats of every description.

3. *The Incense Altar* was, like, the table of shew-bread, made of acacia wood overlaid with gold. It was a cubit square by two in height, and had an ornamental rim of gold around its top, with the ornamental projection at the corners, called "the horns of the altar." It was called "the golden altar," in contradistinction from the large *brazen* altar, for the sacrifices, which was in the large court. There were rings in its sides to receive the golden rods by

* Exod. xxv. 23—28, xxxvii. 10—16. † The Alexandrine version (Lev. xxiv. 7) adds *salt*.
‡ Literally *the bread of the face*.
§ Exod. xxv. 23—28, xxxvii. 10—16, xl. 4, 24; Lev. xxiv. 5—9; Num. iv. 7; 1 Chron. xxiii. 29.

which it was to be carried. Incense was offered upon this altar daily, morning and evening,* at the time the lamps were trimmed. A golden bowl, containing fire from the brazen altar, was brought in and placed upon the golden altar, to receive the incense, and was removed when the incense was burned.

Incense altars of about the same proportions, and similar in form, occur frequently in the Egyptian sculptures; and although the law does not provide for burning incense in censers, it appears, from Lev. x. and Num. xvi., that such were in use. These censers were probably of a similar form to that which is shown in more than one of our engravings [see cuts 8 and 13], being a small bowl at the end of a long and generally very rich handle. In the painted sculptures these are usually coloured yellow, to represent gold; and the priest is seen projecting the incense into the bowl in the form of small pills or pellets. The small size of these censers, and the minute quantities of incense, gives some notion of the preciousness and cost of the perfume.

THE COURT OF THE TABERNACLE was, as it were, the court-yard to the tented palace of the king. We may, indeed, observe that, in Oriental mansions, the house, or at least the most important part of it, is generally at the end of a court, opposite the gate of entrance from without. And if it might not seem to be pressing the analogy too far, we might observe that in this court is usually a tank of water; and the office in which culinary operations are conducted—which might, in this view, be regarded as analogous to the laver and the altar in the court of the tabernacle.

1. *The Altar of Burnt-Offerings*, otherwise called the *Brazen Altar*, and also, to distinguish it from the Incense Altar, the *Outer Altar*, was placed in this court, in the middle of its breadth, and towards the eastern end, before the tabernacle. From this, however, it was, doubtless, at such a distance that the smoke from its continual fire could do no injury to the coverings of the tabernacle.

This altar was a kind of coffer made of shittim wood. It was five cubits square, by three cubits high. The lower part rested on four short columns, or feet, the sides of which were grates of brass, through which the blood of the victims flowed out. The sides of the upper parts of the altar were of wood, covered with brass. The corners were furnished with those projecting points called "horns," which the incense altar also possessed; and as the altar was to be portable, the sides were furnished with four rings, in which were inserted the staves by which it was borne on the shoulders of the priests.

The fire of the altar was kept in a moveable grate, sunk in the centre of its top: through this grate the ashes fell into the cavity below, and were removed through a small door in the side of the ark. Some writers have been much concerned by a fancied difficulty in seeing how the wood-work of the altar was to be kept from being burnt, even though cased without and within with plates of metal. But the grating being *suspended* by iron rings, the fire was nowhere in actual contact with the altar, and, by means of the doors and gratings below, a layer of cool air was constantly interposed, in the cavity of the altar, between its sides and the grate which contained the fire. The altar, like the other utensils of the tabernacle, was covered with a pall in its removals, and as the fire was always to be kept up, this may intimate that on such occasions the grating was taken out of the altar, and the fire carried separately in this its proper receptacle.

By the law there could be no steps of ascent to the altar; but as its height rendered an elevation necessary for the officiating priest, a sloping bank of earth was formed on the south side.†

The appurtenances of the altar were all made of brass. These were *pans* for carrying away the ashes, which were to be taken forth and deposited in a clean place; *shovels* for collecting the ashes; *basins* to receive the blood of the sacrifices to be sprinkled; *prongs* or "*flesh-hooks*" for arranging the parts of the victim on the fire; *fire-pans*, the use of which is

* Exod. xxx. 1—10, xxxvii. 25—29, xl. 5, 26. The incense is described in Exod. xxx. 34—37; any like it was forbidden to be made for private use, nor was any other to be used on this altar. The Jews affirm that the scent of it might be perceived as far as Jericho!

† Exod. xxvii. 1—8, xxxviii. 1—7, xl. 29; Lev. ix. 22.

not very clear, unless they were to take up and bear away, from this altar, the fire which was twice a-day required for burning incense in the sanctuary. There were other sacrificial instruments of brass, not particularly specified.* And here we may direct attention to the fact that there is no mention of iron in all the description of the tabernacle and its utensils, in which metals were so largely employed. The only mention of *iron* at all is to *forbid* the use of tools of iron to square the stones which might be used in building an altar. This shows that while iron was in use, particularly for tools, it was little employed for other and general purposes.

The Brazen Laver stood between the altar and the tabernacle, not directly, but a little to the south. It was of a circular shape, and, together with its base, was made from the mirrors of polished brass which the women contributed to the service of the tabernacle.† The size of this laver is not stated, but was probably considerable. Here the priests constantly washed their hands and their feet before commencing their sacred ministrations.‡

Before quitting the tabernacle, it is well to call to mind the important circumstance, that but *one* place of ritual worship, and but one altar of sacrifice, were allowed by the law. This is a very remarkable peculiarity of the Mosaical system; and, like most of the other peculiarities of that system, was doubtless primarily intended for the prevention of idolatry, and to preserve the purity of the established worship. If other altars, and other tabernacles or temples had been allowed, idolatry and superstition might have crept in at obscure corners, and have gained a head before it attracted the notice of the proper authorities. This, with but one metropolitan altar, at which the priests and Levites exercised a reciprocal inspection over each other, was the less likely to occur. Besides, this limitation was in unison with the general purpose of the altar and the sanctuary: seeing there was but this one place where the visible symbol—the Shechinah—would vividly impress the conviction of the Divine Presence, and call forth the highest degree of reverent adoration; while, in his peculiar character, as King of the Hebrew nation, his subjects would feel that attendance and honour could nowhere be so well rendered as at his royal residence. It is also not to be overlooked that the existence of other altars and other temples, which necessarily would not have possessed the luminous manifestation of God's presence, might have led to the substitution of an image in the place which that occupied in the metropolitan sanctuary,—the rather, seeing that, as we have clearly shown, it filled the place which the idol usually occupied in the temples of the heathen And on the other hand, if the Shechinah had been multiplied in the several temples, an equal danger would have been incurred: for it is easy to see that this would have led to rivalry between the people of the several places thus honoured, and the priests which served at these several altars; and it is the likeliest thing possible that polytheism would have been the ultimate result. The great doctrine of the Unity of God, was forcibly inculcated by his one altar and one sanctuary.

Although the tabernacle certainly cannot, from its known proportions and general appearance, have been a very grand or imposing structure—which, indeed, it could not possibly have been consistently with its design as a *portable* sanctuary—it is quite safe to say that, probably, the world never saw so small a fabric composed of such rich materials, and reared at so vast a cost. As the quantities of the precious metals employed are stated, some idea of its surpassing richness may be formed. The *gold* weighed 29 talents and 730 shekels, or 87,730 shekels, if we allow 3,000 shekels to the talent of 125 lbs.; and this, at 4*l.* the ounce, would be equal to 175,500*l.* sterling. The *silver* was 100 talents and 1,775 shekels, being a half shekel from all the males above twenty years of age when they came out of Egypt, whose number was 603,550; the whole value of this would, at 5*s.* the ounce, be 37,721*l.* The brass, or rather copper, was 70 talents and 24,000 shekels, which, if valued at 1*s.* 3*d.* the pound avoirdupois, would be worth 138*l.* The amount of these several sums would be not less than 213,320*l.* But this account does not include the curtains of the inclosure, the coverings of the tabernacle, the dress of the high-priest and its jewels, the dresses of the priests, or the value of the skill and labour employed in the work, the whole of which may be

* Exod. xxvii. 3, xxxviii. 3. † See p. 204. ‡ Exod. xxx. 18, xl. 7.

fairly taken to have raised its value to 250,000*l*., which, for so small a fabric, is more than one-third of the expense of St. Paul's Cathedral.* We adduce this comparison as curious rather than informing: for circumstances are supposable, and have existed, under which the value of gold and silver, of building materials, of labour and of food, may have been such that the metal employed on the tabernacle may have sufficed to pay the whole cost of the erection of St. Paul's.

This final mention of the works of the tabernacle, taken in connection with our preceding observations, reminds us that many of our readers will wish to know the estimate which we form of the part taken by Bezaleel and Aholiab, under whose direction the whole was executed. When of these, or at least of the former, God says that He had filled them with the wisdom and skill whereby they were qualified for this service, we certainly do not understand that they acquired by special inspiration the arts of design, and of founding, carving, and stone-engraving. The reader knows by this time that while we have not the least disposition to carp at the miracles, we consider more harm than good has been done by the over-anxious assertion of miracles which the Scriptures do not claim, and which, if real, would partake of a supererogatory character, which never belongs to the clear and unquestioned miracles of God. Seeing that the Hebrews had been much employed in the service of the Egyptians, there is no reason to doubt that many of them had been taught the mentioned arts, which happen to be among those for which that people were very famous. There seems no more cause to deny this than that Moses himself "was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians." Bezaleel and Aholiab were probably not only the most skilful of these persons, but the most zealous for the work. We are therefore not prepared to see a miracle in this particular; but we are prepared to see something greater, which is, that God claims as his own—as his gift, as the wisdom which he had put into them—what we might call the "natural" genius or talent whereby they had been enabled to acquire that master skill in the arts which they were now required to exercise in his service. We believe that these endowments were given to them originally by God, and that the circumstances of life which gave them the opportunity of making these acquirements in Egypt were determined by Him with a view to this ultimate employment in his service. We see that the services of other persons similarly qualified were required in the same manner, and on the same grounds, although Bezaleel and Aholiab were the chief.†

3. *The Camp: the Promised Land.*—The *Camps* of the Hebrews participated, in some degree, in the sacredness which attached itself to the tabernacle.‡ And although this chapter professes only to treat of the law of Moses, it may be proper to add, that this idea of consecration and holiness became afterwards connected with the country of the Hebrews itself, which had formerly been consecrated to the true God by the patriarchs in the erection of altars, and was afterwards the seat of the only true religion.§ The later Jews ascribed different degrees of holiness to different regions: the highest to the countries occupied by Moses and Joshua; the least to the regions subdued by David. As to all other lands and districts, they considered them so *profane*, that their very dust would defile a Jew.‖ That place or town in which the tabernacle and the ark of the covenant were fixed was considered more holy than any other. For instance, Gilgal, and afterwards Shiloh.¶

III. SACRED THINGS.—Under this comprehensive head we shall notice the acts and offices which were more or less connected with the religion or worship of the Hebrews.

I. SACRIFICES.**—A sacrifice is that which is offered directly to God, and is in some way destroyed or changed: which is done, as far as respects the flesh employed in the sacrifice, by burning it; and as far as concerns the libation, by pouring it out.

* This was 736,752*l*.
† Compare Exod. xxviii. 3, xxxi. 1-6.
‡ Zec. xiii. 46; Deut. xxiii. 13-15.
§ Exod. xv. 17; Macc. i. 7.
‖ Matt. x. 14; Acts xiii. 51, xviii. 6.
¶ Josh. xviii. 1, 8, 9; Judg. xviii. 31; 1 Sam. i. 3-24, ii. 14, iii. 3-21, iv. 3, 4, 13-18, vii. 5, x. 17. See Jahn, sect. 333.
** The clear and useful sections which Jahn, in his 'Biblische Archæologie' devotes to Sacrifices, form, both in order and matter, the basis of what follows on the same subject. In following him, we have omitted or modified statements in which we do not concur, and have introduced such additional matter as we deemed proper, chiefly from Outram's work on Sacrifices.

A *sacrifice* differs from an *oblation* in this: in a sacrifice there must be a real change or destruction of the thing offered; whereas an oblation is but a simple offering or gift.*

Sacrifices, according to the accounts given in Genesis, were coeval with the existence of the human race.† The law of Moses, therefore, merely fixed more definitely than hitherto had been done the ceremonies which were to be employed when sacrifices, which existed among all ancient nations, were offered.‡

i. *Kinds of Sacrifices.*—The only sacrifices which are mentioned previously to the time of Moses are the whole burnt-offering, the thank-offering, (or "peace-offering,") and the sacrifice by which covenants were confirmed. Nothing is said concerning sacrifices for sins and trespasses, of libations, of meat offerings, and the like; and little information is given concerning the ceremonies which attended those that are noticed.

Moses was the first among the descendants of the patriarchs who reduced sacrifices to some system. He accommodated those which had existed from the days of the fathers to the circumstances of the times in which he lived, and increased the number of the ceremonies which were attendant upon them. The evident objects in this were, to prevent the Hebrews from being led astray by the superior pomp of such occasions among the Gentiles, who had already made sacrifices a systematic part of their worship; to impress upon their minds ideas of a religious nature the more deeply by a repetition of public religious exercises; to excite in the people a spirit of gratitude towards God, and a disposition to obey his commands.

Some of the sacrifices that were authorised by the Mosaical ritual were bloody, that is, consisted of slain victims: others were not, but consisted of cakes, wafers, meal, and libations of wine.

The *Bloody Sacrifices* were some of them *expiatory*, and some of them *thank-offerings*.

The *Expiatory* offerings were either *holocausts*, *sacrifices for sin*, or *trespass-offerings*. The holocausts and sacrifices for sin were to be offered not only for individuals but for the whole people. The expiatory sacrifices secured no expiation in a moral, but merely in a civil point of view; and were accepted by God, not in his character of a moral, but a political ruler. Sacrifices of this kind were slain to the north of the altar, and were regarded as *most holy*. The person who brought the sacrifice, if it were an expiatory one, had no share of it himself.§

The *thank-offering* was slain on the south side of the altar; and when the parts which were to be burnt were placed upon the fire, and the portions which pertained to the priests had been reserved by them, the rest of the parts were allotted to the person who had brought the sacrifice. There was an exception with respect to the *first-born* of animals, which were to be given wholly to the priests.

ii. *Place of Sacrifice.* We have already shown that the law allowed but one altar of sacrifice. This is frequently and emphatically insisted on,‖ and all other altars are disapproved of.¶ Nevertheless, it appears that subsequently to the time of Moses, especially in the days of the kings, altars were multiplied; but although some of them were dedicated to the worship of Jehovah, yet they were viewed with suspicion. It is nevertheless true, that prophets, whose character for rectitude was fully established, did, in some instances, sacrifice in other places than the one designated by the laws.**

Bloody Sacrifices.—The victims which could alone be offered in sacrifice were animals of the ox kind, sheep, and goats. Turtle-doves and young pigeons †† were accepted from persons who were unable to afford the other; but were not allowed in public sacrifices. No wild beasts, even though legally clean, were to be sacrificed. This made a difference between the Hebrews and the heathen on the one hand; while, on the other, it relieved them from the

* Calmet, *in voce* 'Sacrifice.' † Gen. iv. 3-5, viii. 20, xii. 7, xiii. 4, xv. 9-21, xxii. 13. ‡ Compare Lev. i. 2.

§ Lev. vi. 18, 22, vii. 1, *et seq.*, x. 17, xiv. 13. ‖ Deut. xii. 13, 14. ¶ Lev. xxvi. 30; compare Josh. xxii. 10-34.

** 1 Sam. xiii. 8-14, xvi. 1-5; 1 Kings xviii. 21-40. The Jewish writers allege that while the tabernacle was in the midst of the people in the wilderness, and afterwards when it was settled at Shiloh, it was unlawful to sacrifice elsewhere; but when, after Shiloh was destroyed, the tabernacle wandered uncertainly from place to place, sacrifice in other places was allowed, [by what authority?] for Samuel did so, and David, and Elias. With respect to the former instances, it does appear that greater laxity was allowed before the Temple was erected; and for the latter instance, which was subsequent, it will be remembered that the kingdom *of Israel* had no legal altar.

†† Lev. i. 25, 7, xii. 6-8, xv. 29; Num. vi. 10.

burden of bringing what could not be obtained without difficulty. For the latter reason, doubtless, turtle-doves and young pigeons were chosen among birds.

The animals to be slain for the holocaust were males; but in burnt-offerings of birds the sex was not attended to. In sacrifices for sin, the victims might be either male or female. In sacrifices for trespass, bullocks were not used. From eucharistical, or thank-offerings, turtle-doves and young pigeons were excluded. All the victims, except the birds, must not be less than eight days old, as they were not till then considered clean or fit for food. The sheep and goats were commonly a year old; and the bullocks three years old.

All animals that had any defect, the blind, lame, castrated, or sick, were judged unfit to be sacrificed, because they indicated in the person who brought them a mind not sufficiently reverent to God.*

Ceremonies of Sacrifice.—That the license of private or separate sacrifice might not be abused to idolatry, it was required that the person who offered a victim should bring it before the altar in the court, with its head turned towards the sanctuary, and so present it before God. This was called offering him before God; and is to be regarded as a distinct act from the offering of it by fire after it had been slain. Only persons who brought such offerings were admitted into the court of sacrifice, conformably to the Oriental usage, which requires every one who seeks the presence of his king to appear with some offering in his hand, however small may be its value.†

The man having previously washed his hands clean, then placed his hands (except when he offered birds), pressing them forcibly, upon the head of the victim; and standing thus before God, confessed his sins, saying, "I have sinned, O God: I have done perversely: I have rebelled, I have done thus and thus [naming, either mentally or aloud, the particular cause of his offering], but now I repent, and let this victim be my expiation." This act, and the attending confession, substituted the victim in the place of the person who brought it to the altar, and suffered (such was the symbolical meaning of the rite) that punishment which the person had deserved, or would deserve, in case of transgression.‡

The victims that were sacrificed for the people generally were slaughtered by the priests and Levites:§ but those which were sacrificed for individuals were slain in ancient times by the persons who brought them, but in later times by the Levites.|| They were slain immediately, on the spot where they stood when hands were laid upon them. This was on the north side of the altar in the case of the holocaust and of the sacrifices for sin and trespass; and in the others to the south.

The priest took the vessel containing the blood of the victim, and sprinkled it at the foot and on the sides of the altar. The blood of sin-offerings was placed upon the horns of the altar; and if they were offered for the whole of the people, or for the high priest, it was sprinkled towards the veil of the Holy of Holies: and on the great day of atonement, on the lid of the ark, and likewise on the floor before the ark. The blood was also placed upon the horns of the altar of incense. The highest importance was attached to this act of sprinkling the blood, which could be performed by none but a priest.¶

Anciently, the person who brought the victim, when he had slain it, proceeded to flay and cut it in pieces. But in later times this also was done by the priests and Levites. In the time of Josephus there were tables of marble and columns in the temple, expressly adapted to

* Lev. xxii. 20-24; Mal. i. 8. The twelve blemishes which rendered a beast unfit for sacrifice, are increased by the Jewish writers to twenty-three. The Egyptian priests were equally exact in this matter.

† Lev. i. 3-9, iii. 1, iv. 14; compare Rom. xii. 1.

‡ Lev. iv. 15, xvi. 21; compare 2 Chron. xxix. 23.

§ "The victim to be slain was bound, his fore-legs and hinder legs together, and laid, thus bound, with his head towards the south and his face towards the west; and he that killed him stood upon the east side of him with his face westward, and then cut through the throat and the windpipe at one stroke. The blood was caught in a basin by another person, who continued to stir it about, lest it should coagulate before it was sprinkled."—*Lewis.* The mode of tying and slaughtering an animal here described was exactly the same as among the Egyptians. This may partly be seen in the cut at p. 129.

|| Lev. i. 5; 2 Chron. xxix. 24, 34; Ezek. xlvi. 24. It might, we are told, still be done by others—by a woman, a servant, or even an unclean person, who, although he could not enter the court, might stretch his hands within to slay the victim. Deaf persons, fools, and minors, were not qualified to perform this rite.

¶ Lev. i. 5, 6, iv. 7, 16, viii. 15, 16, xvi. 14, 15; Num. xv. 24, xviii. 17; Zech. ix. 15.

all the purposes of slaying and sacrificing. But it should be remarked that the sacrifices for sin, and the holocaust for the people and the high priest were, with the exception of those parts destined to be burnt upon the altar, burnt whole (that is, without being cut up, or the skin taken off) outside the camp or city, in the place where it was permitted to heap ashes together.

Some victims were offered to God before or after being slain, with certain ceremonies of a singular nature; which ceremonies were, at times, also observed in the presentation of the sacred loaves and cakes, and other consecrated gifts. One of these ceremonies was called *heaving*, and the other *waving;* and the offerings which were presented in the one way or the other were accordingly called either *heave-offerings* or *wave-offerings.** It is difficult to say precisely what these ceremonies were, or whether indeed there was any difference between them, since the words which express them are sometimes interchanged with each other.† It seems most probable that the word rendered *heaving* means *elevation*, and that the other, translated *waving*, means, on the contrary, *laying down*, or placing on the earth. But, as what was elevated must be let down again, these words may therefore have been reciprocally used, in such a sense as to express, each of them, at times, the same ceremony. Whatever might be the precise nature of this ceremony of heaving or waving, it appears to have signified that the gift or sacrifice was thereby presented, and was likewise expressive of a desire that it might be acceptable to God.

The separated parts of the victim were taken by the priests to the rise of the altar, and there laid down and salted, according to the law, which said, "With *all* thine offerings thou shalt offer salt."‡ There was no injunction in the law more observed than this: for, as the Jewish writers tell us, nothing came upon the altar unsalted, save the wine of the drink-offering, the sprinkled blood, and the wood for the fire. Salt was also used by the Egyptians, and other heathen, in their sacrifices, although not, perhaps, to the same extent; contrary to the assertion of Maimonides. The reason of this we take to be, that, since that which was offered upon the altar was considered "the food of God," offered to him as the king, it was becoming and proper that it should be seasoned, as is usual with meat designed for food. No doubt there was also a reference to the anti-septic qualities of salt, whereby it became a symbol of friendship and covenant.§ The parts of the victim that were to be burnt were then placed upon the fire of the altar; namely, the whole of the burnt-offering, when it was brought by an individual. But in case it was a burnt-offering for the people and the high priest, or any other sacrifice, save the one just mentioned, only the *fat which covers the intestines*, *the fat which is above the intestines*, *the two kidneys*, *with the fat adhering to them*, *the smaller lobe of the liver*,(?) *and the fat tail* for which one species of Syrian sheep is noted, were to be consumed on the altar.‖ The fat as well as the blood being thus consecrated to the service of the altar, both were forbidden to be eaten under any circumstances by the Israelites. The rest of the flesh, when the sacrifice was a thank-offering, was returned to the sacrificer, who was expected to make a feast of it. This was, however, with the exception of the right shoulder and the breast, which were assigned to the priests. When the sacrifices were sin or trespass offerings, and were not made for the people as a collective body, nor for the high priest, the flesh belonged to the priests, who ate it in the court of the tabernacle or temple.¶

1. *Holocausts*, *or whole Burnt Offerings*, were sacrifices in which the bodies of the victims were entirely consumed. Sacrifices of this sort were more ancient than any others, and for that reason, probably, are regulated first in the law. They were expiatory, and were offered sometimes for the whole people, as were the daily morning and evening sacrifices; and sometimes by an individual for himself alone, either from the impulse of his feelings, or in fulfilment of a vow. These sacrifices were *required* to be offered by individuals under the cir-

* Exod. xxix. 24, 27, 28; Lev. vii. 30, 32, 34, viii. 27, ix. 21, x. 15, xiv. 12, xxiii. 20; Num. v. 25.

† Exod. xxix. 24; compare v. 27, 28, and Lev. ix. 21.

‡ Lev. ii. 12.

§ Hence a durable covenant is called "a covenant of salt" (Num. xviii. 19, et al.). The history of the ideas connected with salt is a curious and large subject into which we cannot enter. Plutarch has a curious paper on it. Sympos., v. 10.

‖ Exod. xxix. 13, 22; Lev. iii. 4, 10, 15, iv. 9, vii. 3, 4, viii. 26, ix. 9, 10, 19.

¶ Num. xviii. 10, 11, 18; Lev. x. 14.

cumstances stated in the texts cited below.* In these sacrifices a libation of wine was poured out at the base of the altar. Among the heathen it was more usual to pour the wine upon the head of the living victim immediately before its immolation to their idols. This is alluded to in Philipp. ii. 17, and 2 Tim. iv. 6; but the Egyptians seem always to have poured *their* libations upon the ground or the altar. When the poverty of the parties obliged them to avail themselves of the gracious arrangement which enabled every one to suit his offering to his circumstances, and bring turtle-doves or young pigeons, the priest was obliged to deal with them in a peculiar manner, described in Lev. i. 11—17: and this is considered by the Jewish writers to have formed the most nice and difficult portion of all his duties.†

2. *The Sin-Offering.*—The exact distinction between the transgressions to which the *sin* and *trespass-offerings* respectively have reference, is exceedingly obscure. We can only offer the usual explanation, which seems the best: this is, that, understood in the strictly legal sense, *sins* were violations of *prohibitory* statutes, that is, the doing of something which the Law commanded *not* to be done; and that, on the other hand, *trespasses* were violations of *imperative* statutes, that is, the neglect of doing things that are *commanded.* To what has already been said concerning sin-offerings, it only seems necessary to add that the demanded offering of expiation varied with the situation and circumstances of the parties. From the high-priest, or from the people collectively, a bullock was required; a civil magistrate might offer a goat; and from persons in a private station only a kid or lamb, with the usual power to the poor of substituting a turtle-dove and young pigeon.‡

Sin-offerings were required, ceremonially, under particular circumstances, mentioned in the texts cited below.§ One of these may be noticed, being that which required this offering of mothers at child-birth. If the child were a son it was forty, if a daughter eighty days before the completion of her time of purification. She then presented, as her sin-offering, a turtle-dove and a young pigeon; also a lamb for a burnt-offering; and, in case of poverty, another dove and pigeon, as a burnt-offering, instead of the lamb. That our Lord's mother was obliged to avail herself of this indulgence to the poor, when she offered "*two* turtle-doves and *two* young pigeons," is a touching, because purely incidental, illustration of the born poverty of Him "who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich."

3. *Trespass-Offerings* were not required of the people as a body. They were offered by such individuals as had become conscious of their error in having, through ignorance, mistake, or want of reflection, neglected some of the ceremonial precepts of the law, or some of those natural laws which had been introduced into the code, and sanctioned with the penalty of death. The trespasses which could, in a civil sense, be expiated by such sacrifices, are enumerated in Lev. iv. 1-16, v. 1-19.

4. *Peace*, or *Thank-Offerings.*—Any kind of legal victim might be offered, with the ceremonies already indicated. They were offered as indications of thankfulness or joy, and were accompanied by unleavened cakes of three different kinds, prepared with oil. The priest who sprinkled the blood presented one of each of these cakes as an offering.‖ The parts of the victim which were not offered on the altar, or received by the priest, and the remainder of the cakes, were, as already stated, returned to the offerer, to be converted by him into an entertainment, to which widows, orphans, the poor, slaves, and Levites were invited. That this feast of benevolence and joy might not be omitted or postponed, although what was not eaten on the day of offering might be kept to the next day, what remained until the third day was to be burnt.¶ This feast could not be celebrated beyond the limits of the place, town, or city in which the sanctuary was stationed.

5. *Covenant Sacrifices.*—There are no regulations concerning these in the law, but it may be gathered from various intimations that covenants continued to be ratified in the manner of Abraham's memorable sacrifice, which has been described in p. 40 of this work. Jahn

* Num. vi. 11—16; Lev. xii. 6—8. See also Psa. li. 19, lxvi. 13, 14. † Lev. i. 3—17. ‡ Lev. iv. 22—35.
§ Lev. xii. 6, 8; compare Luke ii. 24; Lev. xiv. 13, 19, 22, 30, 31; Num. vi. 10, 11. ‖ Lev. vii. 11—14, 28—34.
¶ Lev. vii. 15—21; Deut. xii. 18.

considers that this was not a separate class of offerings, but belonged, rather, to the peace, or thank-offerings, and adds,—"The custom of confirming covenants in this manner was derived from a practice among the Chaldeans, among whom those who were about to confirm an agreement slew and divided the victims, and placed the parts opposite to each other. They then passed between the parts thus divided, saying, at the same time, 'Let it not thus be done unto us.'"* From this it appears that the act had a symbolical meaning, the victims being symbols of the punishment which was to fall upon the violator of the covenant, which those who passed between imprecated upon their own heads, in case of such violation. Another instance of the kind occurs so late as the reign of King Zedekiah;† and, from intimations in other cases, it appears that other covenants were confirmed among the Hebrews in like manner.

Meaning of Sacrifices.—The section with this title in Jahn's valuable work is so important and instructive that we cannot but transcribe it literally and entire, as it lies before us:—

"From what has been said, it is sufficiently clear what significancy or meaning we should attach to sacrifices. For if it were the case that the Hebrews, subsequently to the time of Abraham, were accustomed to indicate in an emblematical manner the punishment due to the violaters of a covenant by the sacrifices made use of when the covenant was entered into, there can be no doubt that they likewise attached a symbolical meaning to sacrifices on other occasions. For instance, such a symbolical meaning was conveyed by the whole burnt-offerings, or holocausts, which were understood both by Noah and Abraham, from what God himself had communicated to them,‡ to be a confirmation, on the part of God, of his promises. With regard to holocausts, it may be remarked that an additional significancy was attached to them by Moses; for he introduced the ceremony of imposition of hands, which was a typical indication that punishment was due to the person who offered the sacrifice, in case he failed in the fulfilment of his promises.

Holocausts being typical of the confirmation of divine promises, was the reason that they were burnt whole, and that they were held in such particular estimation; for promises were the very foundation of the whole Jewish polity. The reason also that sacrifices of this kind might be offered by Gentiles who had so far left their own systems as to acknowledge the true God, was, that in offering such sacrifices they were understood to make correspondent promises, of which sacrifices were a confirmation. They possessed, likewise, an expiatory signification, because they indicated that God would be firm in the fulfilment of his part of the covenant, whatever might be the delinquencies of men.

The victims for sins and trespasses, which seem to have been new kinds of expiation introduced by Moses, signified the punishment due to the person who had thus erred; and showed at the same time that God would not fail in performing what he had said in reference to them.

Finally, those sacrifices which are denominated peace-offerings, and eucharistical offerings, had a typical meaning as well as others; they being indications of the punishments which threatened the Hebrews if they should neglect to walk in the religious way which they had promised. In other words, the meaning of them was as much as if they had said, "*It shall not be so with us as with these sacrifices, for we will adhere to our promises.*" Hence, being confirmed anew in their resolutions on these occasions, they felt themselves at liberty to indulge in conviviality.

The sacrifices, therefore, in which aminals were slain were all symbolical, or had a meaning. The divine promises were confirmed by them; and the Hebrews, on the other hand, imparted by them new sanctity to the engagements which they had entered into, to continue faithful to their religion; and were thus excited to more earnest desires for piety of feeling and rectitude of conduct.

If many of the Hebrews were disposed to go further than this, and to attribute an inherent efficacy to the sacrifices, and to trust in the multitude of victims, without paying any regard

* Ephrem Syrus, t. i. p. 161. † Jer. xxxiv. 18. ‡ Gen. viii. 20, xv. 9-18.

to the temperament of mind in which they might be offered, yet even this does not prove the inaccuracy of our statement; more especially as this error is frequently condemned, and in very decided terms.*

That these symbolical substitutions of victims in place of transgressors prefigured a true substitution in the person of Jesus Christ, seems to have been known to very few of the the prophets.† Still, this obscurity with respect to the prospective import of sacrifices, is no more proof against the actual existence of such an import than a kindred obscurity, in another case, is against the existence of prophecies, some of which the prophets themselves confessed they did not understand. But although the people did not originally understand this particular meaning of prophecies, they were prepared to perceive it at last. Hence the death of violence which Jesus suffered is everywhere termed in the New Testament a SACRIFICE; for expressions of this kind are not mere allusions, such as occur in the texts cited below; ‡ but they indicate a real sacrifice in the person of Christ, which the sacrifices in the Old Testament prefigured, as expressly stated in the other passages which the note below indicates." §

BLOODLESS OFFERINGS. These were formed principally by what is usually called the Meat Offering and Drink Offering, and some of them will come under the name of oblations, as distinguished from sacrifices, properly so called. They consisted either of fine wheat flower, or of wine; but there were the exceptions that the offering on the second day of the passover was a sheaf of barley, and that the trespass-offering of the suspected wife was not of wheat but of barley meal. The flour was offered sometimes with and sometimes without preparation. It was salted; sometimes oil was poured upon it, sometimes it was kneaded with oil, and afterwards besmeared with it; and by some persons was offered with frankincense.

Honey and leaven were not used,‖ except in the two leavened cakes on the feast of Pentecost, and the cakes of the eucharistical and peace-offerings, in which leaven (but not honey) was allowed, and these were not to be placed upon the altar.¶ It is easy to conceived that leaven was forbidden as being opposite in its nature and effects to the salt, the use of which was carefully enjoined. The interdiction of honey is not so explicable, unless we suppose, with Maimonides and others, it was that God might not seem to be pleased with things on account of their sweetness, as well as because it was usual among the heathen to use honey in their offerings, under the notion of its being as acceptable to the gods as to men.

All the offerings of which we have been speaking were regarded, in some sort, as appendages to the animal sacrifices. They were offered with all burnt-offerings, except of birds; with the peace-offerings;** but not with sin-offerings, except that which was offered at the cleansing of a leper:†† and, indeed, that none might be kept back by mere poverty from the benefits of this expiation, it was provided that an offering of flour merely should be accepted from those who were too poor to bring even turtle-doves and pigeons.‡‡

Other cases, in which offerings of this class were exhibited *apart* from animal sacrifices, are found in the twelve loaves of shew-bread; the sheaf of barley offered on the second day of the the Passover; §§ and the loaf which on the day of Pentecost was offered as the first-fruits.‖‖

Some of these offerings were eaten by the priests, without bringing them to the altar, as the stale loaves of shew-bread, and the leavened cakes. Some were wholly consumed on the altar, as the meat-offering for a priest; ¶¶ but in most cases a small portion only, as a memorial, was consumed on the altar, and the rest belonged to the priest.***

The *quantity* of the offering of flour and oil was determined by the relative importance of the accompanying animal sacrifice—being the greatest for a bullock, and least for a sheep or lamb.

* Psa. xl. 5, 6. l. 8—13; Isa. i. 11—15; compare 1 Sam. xv. 22; Hos. vi. 6; Micah vi. 6, 8; Mal. ii. 1—9.

† Isa. liii.

‡ Rom. xii. 1, xv. 16; Phil. ii. 17; 2 Tim. iv. 6; Heb. xiii. 15, 16.

§ Heb. ix. 3—28, x. 10—14, 18; compare Matt. xxvi. 28; Mark xiv. 24; Luke xxii. 20; 1 Cor. xi. 24, 25; Heb. xii. 24; 1 Pet. i. 2; compare Exod. xxiv. 8; John i. 29, 36, xix. 36, 37; 1 Cor. v. 7; 1 Peter ii. 24; compare Isa. liii. 5—12; 2 Cor. v. 21; Eph. v. 2; Rom. iii. 23—25, vii. 25; 1 John ii. 2, iv. 10.

‖ Lev. ii. 10—12.

¶ Lev. vii. 13, xxiii. 17.

** Num. xv. 3, &c.

†† Lev. xiv. 10.

‡‡ Lev. v. 1—4, 11—13.

§§ Lev. xxiii. 10.

‖‖ Lev. xxiii. 17—20.

¶¶ Lev. vi. 23.

*** Lev. ii. 2, 3.

The Drink Offering, or libation of wine, was an accompaniment of both the bloody and bloodless sacrifices. The quantity was the same as that of the oil used with the meat-offering. It was poured out at the base of the altar,—or rather part of it was,—the residue being reserved by the priests to drink with their portion of the offerings.*

The First-born.—To exhibit their gratitude to God for preserving their first-born in Egypt from destruction when the first-born among the Egyptians (both of men and animals) were all slain, the first-born of men and animals were to be consecrated to God. The first-born children were to be presented before the Lord, and then to be redeemed at a sum not exceeding five shekels. This could not take place till the child was a month old, and was generally deferred to the ceremony of purification for child-birth.† The child was not legally considered to belong to his parents till thus redeemed. For this redemption there was the further reason, that the first-born were, by ancient usages, priests by birth, and were to be redeemed from serving at the altar.‡

The first-born of cattle, sheep, and goats, from eight days to a year old, were to be offered in sacrifice. If under any blemish which made them unfit for sacrifice, they were allotted to the use of the priests. These could not be redeemed.§ But if it were an unclean beast—an ass is instanced,—unfit for sacrifice, it might either be redeemed with a lamb, or by the payment of an estimated price. If not redeemed, its neck was to be broken,—a mode of death evidently designed to prevent its blood being shed in sacrifice to idols.||

The pervading idea of all this is, that the consecrated first-born ought to be offered to God upon the altar, if fit for sacrifice: hence no suitable creature could be redeemed. But man is excluded, and by that exclusion declared unfit—in common with unclean beasts. We wish this to be noted as designed to render human sacrifices to the Lord impossible. Such, indeed, were expressly interdicted and precluded by other regulations.

First-Fruits.—The first products of the soil were in the same case as the first products of the womb. Every new planted tree was declared impure for three years, during which whatever grew upon it was not to be eaten or even gathered. The fruits of the fourth year were, therefore, considered the first-fruits. As such they were to be presented before the Lord, and eaten before his holy place; and this, Maimonides alleges, was because idolaters were accustomed to eat their first-fruits in the temples of their idols. But some understand that these first-fruits became the due of the priests, and were eaten by them.

Besides this there was the first-fruits of the subsequent annual produce of fruit-trees, and the same of corn, wine, oil, barley, and wool. The first sheaf of barley that was cut (formally), was offered on the second day of the Passover, and the first loaves that could be made from the new corn were offered on the feast of Pentecost, both in the name of the people.

But individuals were also bound to offer the first-fruits of the year. The quantity is not specified, but is left to the will of the giver. We are told by the Jewish writers, however, that the proportions varied according to the disposition of the giver from a fortieth to a sixtieth. The former was considered liberal, and the latter mean. These were the first-fruits,¶ which the people were so often commanded to bring to the place of the sanctuary. This they did, with considerable ceremony and manifestations of gladness, and presented them in acknowledgment that God had given to them the good land which he promised to their fathers. As the act of presentation he repeated the remarkable form of words prescribed by Moses,—"A Syrian ready to perish was my father," &c.**

This is one of the most marked of many regulations which exhibit to us the singular spectacle of legislation for a condition of society which did not yet exist among this people; and with reference to a country of which they knew little or nothing, and which was, as yet, theirs only in the purposes and promises of God.

Tithes.—Besides these first-fruits the Hebrews were required to render the *tithes* or *tenths*

* Num. xv. 3—12, xxviii. 7—29.
† Exod. xiii. 13; Num. xviii. 14—16; Luke ii. 22.
‡ Num. iii. 20, 21.
§ Lev. xxvii. 26; Num. xviii. 17, 18.
|| Exod. xiii. 13; Lev. xxvii. 13.
¶ It is alleged by some of the Jewish writers, that only the wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, and dates, were taken to Jerusalem; and that the corn, wine, oil, and wool, were fetched by the priests.
** Deut. xxvi. 4, *et seq.*; see also Exod. xxiii. 19; Lev. ii. 12; Num. xv. 17—21, xviii. 11—13; Deut. xxviii. 1, 11.

of all the produce of their fields and flocks. They paid *two*-tenths, or, rather, they paid one-tenth out of their own control, and were required themselves to appropriate another tenth in a particular manner.

The first tithe was assigned to God as the ruler of the state, and was granted by him to the tribe of Levi, as pay for the services, religious and civil, which they rendered to the state. The fruits of trees, the products of the land, and cattle were all subject to tithe. It, however, only bore on the larger articles of produce, although, in later times, the Pharisees affected the scrupulous exactness of rendering it in the smallest matters, and offered even the tithe of mint, anise, and cumin.* The proprietor set apart the first-fruits, in the first instance, and then laid aside the tenth of the remainder as the first tithe. It is understood that this was always to be paid in kind, and that it was not necessary to take it to Jerusalem, but might be delivered to the Levites in their several cities. The Levites before they could touch any portion of this for their own use, were to set apart the tenth of it for the priests. This was called the *tithe of tithes*, or the *tithe of holy things ;* and we are informed by the Jewish writers that a priest was appointed to be with the Levites when they took their tithes, to see that the priests received their due. To this the Levites were required to add a tithe of the produce of the fields belonging to the suburbs of their own cities.

The first tithe being paid, the proprietor set apart out of what remained a *second tithe*. But the amount of this did not go out of his own hands absolutely, but was required to be taken by him to the place of the sanctuary, in the courts of which he was to expend it in making feasts, at which he was to entertain not only his own family and friends but the Levites. In case the person lived at a distance, which might render it inconvenient to convey the second tithe to Jerusalem, he was not compelled to pay it in kind. It might be redeemed, and the estimated value was then to be spent in Jerusalem in purchasing provisions for the feast. But in this case one-fifth was added to the estimated value, seeing that the person was thereby freed from the expense of carriage. Every third year this journey to the place of the sanctuary was dispensed with, and the tithe-payers were to expend their second tithes at their own houses, in entertaining the Levites, the fatherless, the widows, and the poor. This appears to be the correct interpretation, although some imagine that this was not a different appropriation of the second tithe, but a third and additional tithe imposed every third year. The tithe was called the *second tithe*, on account of its being taken from what remained after the first tithe; and, on account of its different appropriation on the third year, it also bore the name of the *poor man's tithe*, and the *third tithe*.

It will be observed that the tithes were appropriated by the owners themselves, without judicial or sacerdotal supervision; although, probably, the Levites, if they suspected themselves wronged, were at liberty to see that they had their due; but, with respect to the second tithe, everything was left to the honour and conscience of the people, guarded only by the declaration they were required to make every third year before God.†

As it is of some importance to understand the real amount which the Hebrew community paid as the fixed dues of the Levitical tribe, the following account of the proportion which the tithe in grain bore to the whole produce ‡ may be useful, and will serve to illustrate the preceding statements :—

Suppose the husbandman to have had . . .	100 bolls,
The least that could be paid to the *priests*, as the first-fruits of the threshing-floor, was one-sixtieth, or .	1·66 = $1\frac{2}{3}$ boll nearly,
Leaving .	98·34
Out of which the husbandman paid the first tithe to the Levites, or	9·83 = $9\frac{8}{10}$ bolls,
Leaving to the husbandman	88·51

* Matt. xxiii. 23.

† Lev. xxvii. 30—33; Num. xviii. 20—32; Deut. xii. 11, 17—19, xiv. 22—29, xvi. 12—15; 2 Chron. xxiii. 5, 6; Neh. x 28, 37, xiii. 10—14; Mal. iii. 8—10; Heb. vii. 5—7.

‡ Derived from Brown's 'Antiquities,' i. 340, 341.

Brought forward . . .	88·51	
From which he drew the second tithe, either to be carried to Jerusalem, or commuted for money; equal to .	8·85	$= 8\frac{8}{10}$ bolls,
Leaving to the husbandman as his net produce .	79·66	

Thus in every 100 bolls of farm produce, the husbandman got $79\frac{66}{100}$ bolls, and the priests and Levites $20\frac{34}{100}$, including the second tithe, which, however, was not solely theirs. Should it be asked in what proportion these $20\frac{34}{100}$ bolls were divided between the priests and Levites, it may be answered that the priests received to their sole use, the 1·66, or $1\frac{3}{4}$ boll nearly, first deducted as the first-fruits of the threshing-floor; and they were entitled to a tenth of the first tithe that was due to the Levites; which, being in the present case 9·83 bolls, left ·98, or nearly one boll to the priests. Their whole proportion, therefore, of the 20·34 bolls was 2·64, or above $2\frac{1}{2}$ bolls, leaving to the Levites 17·70, or $17\frac{3}{4}$ bolls nearly. Thus, the priests had about an eighth part, and the Levites seven-eighths. Yet this cannot be stated as exact; for when the second tithes were brought to Jerusalem, they were eaten not by the priests and Levites solely, but by the husbandman's family, the priests, and the Levites conjointly. Consequently, the priests would come in for their share, in proportion only to their numbers, when compared with the Levites who were on duty, and the family of the husbandman. In fact, it does not seem that more than the first tithe can well be stated as the property of the Levitical tribe. For the second tithe is less to be considered a Levitical due than as an amount which the people were required to expend on particular objects, in the benefit of which they and theirs had a full and principal participation.

However, seeing that the habit of taking impressions from loose comparisons, and of reasoning upon them as if they were positive facts, has led to a very general misapprehension of the real nature of these tithes it may be well to state what they actually were; and it will then appear that the amount drawn from the people was exceedingly moderate, till, in the end, the people thought proper to lay themselves under other obligations, and place themselves under other burdens, which made these original and legal payments seem burdensome.

God, in giving to the Israelites the land of Canaan, which He conquered for them, and which they owed entirely to his bounty, chose to reserve to himself the rights of sovereign proprietor of the soil, which were, in the East, annexed to that kingly character in which He stood to the nation. To keep them in mind that the land was his, he thought proper to demand the same quit rent * of one-tenth which was usually paid to the kings in other nations. Aristotle mentions this as an ancient law of Babylon.† In Egypt one-fifth was paid, which was more than equivalent to both the first and second tithes and the first-fruits together. And that such a payment was considered a part of the *jus regum* in the eastern countries bordering Palestine, appears manifestly from the fact that when the Israelites were hankering after a human king "like the nations," Samuel warned them that they would be burthened with an additional tithe; plainly intimating that while the appropriation of the existing tithe could not be altered, the new king would expect a tithe like the neighbouring kings, which would form the ground of a new imposition. And, in fact, we are convinced that it was this further impost, with the other expenses contingent on an *additional* regal establishment, which made the people ultimately discontented with the burden of the legal tithes and first-fruits. The tenth was therefore strictly a rent, from the tenants to the proprietor, and these tenants had no other rent to pay. The proceeds of this rent, God,‡ as king, appropriated to the subsistence of his ministers and servants.

But then, again, the Levites were one of the twelve tribes, and as such had a right to a

* "When William the Conqueror parcelled out the lands of England, he reserved a certain small rent to be annually paid out of every estate to the crown, as an acknowledgment that it was received from and held under him. This rent is paid to this day from all freehold estates, under the name of chief rent. If there be any estates that pay it not, it is because they have been purchased out of others, of which purchase it was made on condition that they should be clear of this incumbrance, those other estates paying it for them."—Jennings.

† Aristot. Œconomic. lib. ii. sub fin.

‡ This appears ftom the fact that the habit of paying them had been discontinued by the reign of Hezekiah, who felt it necessary to issue an order on the subject, and to appoint officers to collect these dues for the Levites and priests. See 2 Chron. xxxi.

twelfth part of the landed inheritance of Israel's sons. But they had only some towns given them in the several tribes, for the purpose of residence, with a narrow belt of ground around each town. As the other tribes were enriched to the extent of their relinquishment, they had a right to compensation on their own account to the extent of their deprivation. And besides this, if God had not thought proper to assign them his rent-charge, in payment for their public services, they would have had a fair claim to separate compensation from the people, for the consecration of their time and talents to the service of the state. Seeing then that the Levites had but a festive share in the second tithes, which do not seem to have been demanded with a prominent view to *their* benefit, it appears that the tribe would have been very inadequately compensated, if compensated at all, for their relinquishments and services unless the rent-charge had been assigned them. So upon this tithe there was a two-fold or three-fold claim ; and that it pleased God to make these claims coalesce in the same impost, intimates a desire which has not been properly appreciated, to provide for the Levites and the service of the state without overburdening the people. We are precluded from giving this view all the argument and illustration it might receive. But we think it will appear that a more economical arrangement for the government of a state was never made, when we bear in mind that the required payments were not *taxes*, but partly rents, and partly compensations for lands, and payments for services; and that these payments were consequently not additions to rents and taxes, but were themselves the only rents and taxes which the people had to pay.

IV. SACRED TIMES.

1. *The Sabbath.*—In considering what may be called the sacred tunics of the Hebrews, the sabbath seems to offer the first claim to our attention. It is not our design in this place to examine the question, whether the sabbath had not an earlier existence than the exode of the Israelites ; partly because it has no reference to our immediate object, and partly because it is our conviction that no satisfactory result can be reached, and that the affirmative can be neither satisfactorily proved nor convincingly gainsaid.

Undoubtedly the sabbath was enforced upon the Hebrews, if not first instituted, *before* the giving of the law. The passover was instituted before they left Egypt; and, in like manner, the sabbath was given after they had crossed the Red Sea, and before they reached "the mount of God." Hence, when the law was subsequently given from that mount, they were called upon to "*Remember* the sabbath-day" as a previous institution.

The great object of this institution is one not properly appreciated at this time; and for the reason which we have applied to other parts of the system—that the doctrine it was framed to preserve, is to us a point of familiar and elementary knowledge, being that the world had a Sovereign Creator.

Having already illustrated the ancient importance of this doctrine, we shall here only point to the force and significancy which a proper view of its relative importance gives to the assigned reason for this institution,—"For in six days JEHOVAH made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day from all his work." The sabbath is the most direct and imposing monument of this grand doctrine which the law contains; and while the Israelites continued to observe their sabbaths, it would be impossible for them to forget that God was the Creator of the world. The observance of the sabbath was therefore a public acknowledgment of belief in this doctrine.* And it was a common saying of the Jews, that whoever did any work on the sabbath-day denied the work of creation.

From this we see the reason why the violation of the sabbath was subject to the same punishment as an open defection from the true God. The offence was treason ; the punishment—*death*.†

But, although this was the principal object of the institution, it had other and subordinate

* We were about to say that this striking observance was likely to attract the attention of the heathen, and that their inquiries as to its cause would probably convey to them the knowledge that, at least, such a belief existed. But we recollected that Plutarch, a man of much reading and information, had never heard this or any one of the real reasons for this institution, but amuses himself with conjecturing that the sabbaths were feasts of Bacchus, because the Jews drank wine on that day, and because there were some places in Greece where the priests of Bacchus were called *Sabbi*.—Sympos. iv. 5.

† Exod. xvi. 22—30, xxxi. 12—17, xxxv. 2 ; Num. xv. 32—36.

objects of much importance. Like many other of the Mosaical statutes, if not, indeed, the whole body of them, the law of the sabbath was made to bear a special reference to the state and condition of the people, as a nation delivered from the hand and bitter bondage of Egypt, taken into covenant with God, and carefully kept in a state of separation from every other people. And, indeed, there was no observance, not even circumcision, by which they were so conspicuously and markedly distinguished from other nations as by their observance of the sabbath. This object of the law is in one instance * stated so strongly, as to be made to appear almost the primary object of the institution.

Another ground for the institution was political, being that men, especially field labourers and slaves, and even labouring cattle, might rest and be refreshed; and might be led to rejoice in the goodness of God, who gave them this season of suspension from their toils.†

And here we may direct attention to a beautiful circumstance which is commonly overlooked, that while of the Sabbaths, and the day of expiation only, a complete cessation from all labour and occupation is directed, in the words "Thou shalt do no manner of work," the common affairs of life were not suspended on the other festival days, only relief was provided for labourers and slaves in the command "Thou shalt do no *servile* work thereon."

Few particular regulations for the day are given in the law; but its interpreters took care abundantly to supply this want. It was forbidden to kindle a fire on that day.‡ Hence the Sabbath-breaker § committed a complicated offence, when, by his act of labour, gathering sticks indicated an intention to kindle a fire. But it was not understood that this prevented a fire or light, kindled before the Sabbath, from being kept burning. They therefore had fires, as now, in cold weather, to warm themselves,‖ but not to dress victuals. Nevertheless, as the day was a feast, not a fast, they considered they were bound to make it a day of gladness. Accordingly, sorrow on that day was regarded as an indication of some great calamity.¶ The day was spent in rest and decorous cheerfulness. The people dressed themselves in their best attire, and thought themselves bound to indulge in better fare on the Sabbaths than on other days. It is true that their feast for this day was prepared before the Sabbath commenced;** but this was not to lessen its cheerfulness, but that servants might have an equal share in the general rest. Upon the whole, as far as external acts were concerned, the day was spent in the same manner as that in which other nations spent their festival days. It is indeed observable that the heathen writers who take notice of the Jewish sabbath always describe it as a cheerful festival.

No one was "to go out of his place" on the sabbath-day. This forbade travelling. "Place" was understood to mean the town, village, or camp, in which a person abode; and he was held to be restricted from going more than two-thirds of a mile therefrom. This was what is called in the New Testament "a Sabbath-day's journey."

"The Preparation of the Sabbath" also mentioned in the New Testament,†† was the time from three o'clock on the Friday afternoon till six, when the sabbath commenced.

Nothing that was usually performed in the tabernacle or temple was unlawful on the sabbath-day, though it would have been a breach of the sabbath elsewhere. Hence it became a proverb that *there was no sabbatism in the Temple.* To this Christ alludes in saying, "The priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless."‡‡ Indeed, there was more employment there on this day than on any other, as the daily sacrifices were doubled,§§ and the shew-bread was renewed in the sanctuary.‖‖ What else was done we are not told, and it is useless to deduce probabilities from long subsequent practices, when synagogues were established. It is nowhere made incumbent upon the people to assemble simultaneously, on the Sabbaths or any other days, at the tabernacle or temple. Indeed it would have been impossible for the whole nation to assemble at one place of worship. They were required to worship *towards* the temple, not *in* it, though such as pleased might do so, as those who lived near the

* Deut. v. 14, 15; see also Exod. xxxi. 13—17. † Exod. xxiii. 21. ‡ Exod. xxxv. 3. § Num. xv. 34.

‖ At present the Jews get their fires lighted on the sabbath-days by Christians, unless they keep them up all the Friday night.

¶ Lam. ii. 6; Hos. ii. 11. ** Founded on Exod. xvi. 23. †† Mark xv. 42.

‡‡ Matt. xii. 5. §§ Num. xxviii. 9, 10. ‖‖ Lev. xxiv. 8.

tabernacle and temple seem generally to have done. It appears in practice that the people on this day availed themselves of such opportunities for religious instruction as they enjoyed. They had no regular teachers; but on this day they seem to have gathered round their prophets to hear their exhortations;* and religious parents availed themselves of the leisure of this day to obey the injunctions of the law in teaching their children in the doctrine of God, as the creator and governor of all things; and in the wonderful providences both of mercy and judgment with which he had visited his people.

New Moons and Feast of Trumpets.—As all the idolatrous nations worshipped the moon or her representatives, and greeted her every fresh appearance with sacrifices and superstitious ceremonies, an opening would have been left to idolatry unless the day of the new moons were preoccupied as festivals to the Lord. Accordingly it was directed that on the new moons, in addition to the daily sacrifices, two bullocks, a ram, and seven sheep of a year old should be offered to God, together with proportionate meat-offerings and libations.† The return of the new moons was announced by the sounding of the silver trumpets;‡ and in this way provision was made for keeping up a knowledge of the end and commencement of each new moon.

It appears that after the introduction of the monarchical form of government, the kings were wont to give an entertainment to their friends and officers;§ and probably other principal persons and heads of tribes did the same. Those persons whose piety induced them to seek religious instruction visited, on such occasions, the prophets.|| Labour was not interdicted on those days; but as the new moon of the seventh month, or Tishri (October), was the commencement of the civil year, it was observed as a festival, and announced by the sound of trumpets. Hence it was called the *Feast of Trumpets*, or rather, *the day of trumpet blowing*, and also, *the memorial of blowing of trumpets.*¶ Besides the sacrifices common to other new moons, a bullock was offered on this occasion, a ram, a meat-offering, of flour and oil, and a libation of wine for the burnt-offering.** All *servile* work was abstained from on this day.†† An account of the division of time among the Hebrews does not belong to this place, but will be given in a note at the end of this chapter, as a matter important to the history.(1)

YEARLY FEASTS.—Besides these weekly and monthly festivals, there were three annual feasts, distinguished as the Great Festivals. These were, the Passover, the Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles.

These were distinguished from the Sabbaths and other holy days by the circumstance that two of them lasted for eight and one for seven successive days, and that at all of them the presence of all the adult males was expected at the place of the sanctuary.‡‡ Their attendance, however, was not so rigidly exacted at the other two as at the Passover, when that attendance was obligatory on pain of death, except in particular cases, enumerated in Num. ix. 1—13. The reason of this particularity about the Passover apparently was, that the Paschal Lamb, then to be eaten, was a sacrifice, and sacrifices could be nowhere slaughtered but at the sanctuary.

At the return of these festivals, the Hebrews appeared in the first instance to make their appearance at the tabernacle or temple, with presents, which were taken from their second tithes and first-fruits; or, in other words, at these several festivals, the people availed themselves of the opportunity for presenting such of their first-fruits and second tithes as had become due since their last appearance. They offered sacrifices, feasted, and rejoiced in God, as being full of kindness and mercy. Women were exempted from attending, but it appears that they might attend if they were able and wished to do so; §§ and lest the men should be deterred by the fear of leaving their homes defenceless, their Almighty King undertook to guard their habitations and substance, by his special providence, while they were away, and conveyed to them the assurance that during these periodical absences "no man should desire their land."|||| This was a manifest and constant proof to them of God's sovereign power over all men, and

* 2 Kings, iv. 23. † Num. x. 10, xxviii. 11—14. ‡ Num. x. 10. § 1 Sam. xx. 5, 24—27.
|| 2 Kings, iv. 23. ¶ Lev. 23, 24; Num. xxix. 1—6. ** Num. xxix. 2—9. †† Lev. xxiii. 25.
‡‡ Exod. xxiii. 14—17. §§ 1 Sam. i. 3, 7; Luke ii. 41. |||| Exod. xxxiv. 24.

they were themselves the special objects of his care: for it is a fact that the most vigilant enemies of the nation never took advantage of these seemingly favourable occasions; in consequence of which the Jews, though by no means over-ready to believe the divine promises, learned to leave their dwellings and families without the least apprehension of danger. According to the practice of the Orientals, they travelled in large parties, all belonging to a particular town or district forming one company, taking the necessaries for their journey with them.* It was among such a "company" that Joseph and Mary sought Jesus Christ,† who had remained behind at Jerusalem. Reserving some remarks on the general purposes and uses of these institutions, we may now proceed to notice them severally.

1. *The Passover*, kept in remembrance of their departure from Egypt. The occasion of this institution has been duly noticed in the History. It was to commence on the evening subsequent to the fourteenth day of the first moon of the second year, with eating what was called the Paschal Lamb, and was to continue seven whole days, that is, till the twenty-first. Although moons which began with the new moon cannot, with perfect accuracy, be accommodated to our months, the first moon of the Hebrew year must always have fallen within the month of April.

During the whole of this festival the people ate unleavened bread, whence it is sometimes called the *Feast of Unleavened Bread.*‡ On the eve of the fourteenth the leaven was removed from all dwellings, so that nothing might be seen of it during the week; a circumstance respecting which the Jews are very scrupulous even at this day.§

Previously to the commencement of the feast, on the tenth, the master of a family set apart a ram or a goat of a year old, usually the former,|| which he slew on the fourteenth, "between the two evenings," before the altar; ¶ but in Egypt, where the event occurred which the Passover celebrated, the blood was sprinkled on the post of the door.** The ram or kid was roasted whole, with two spits thrust through it, the one lengthwise, the other transversely, crossing the longitudinal one near the fore legs, so that the animal was, in a manner, crucified. The oven in which it was roasted was the circular pit in the floor [ground], which is still commonly used in the East. The restriction that it was to be roasted, *not boiled or eaten raw*, is thought to be levelled at some idolatrous forms of sacrifice-feasting.

Thus roasted, the Paschal Lamb was served up with a salad of wild and bitter herbs, and with the flesh of other sacrifices (peace-offerings), which are mentioned in Deut. xvi. 2-6. Not fewer than ten, nor more than twenty persons were admitted to these sacred feasts, which were, at first, eaten, in Egypt, with loins girt about, with sandals on the feet, and with all the preparations for an immediate journey. But this does not appear to have been the case at any subsequent period. The command, however, not to break a bone of the offering, which was given in consequence of the people going in such haste (as they might otherwise have been delayed), was ever after observed among the Jews.††

In later times the celebration became encumbered with a number of involved ceremonies, very different from the simplicity and haste of the original institution. As these derive no authority from the law, we shall only state such of them as serve to illustrate the account of that celebration of the Passover by Jesus Christ, which to the Christian is not less interesting than the original institution was to the Jew.

The master of the family, after the Paschal supper was prepared, broke the bread, having

* We think not *tents*, as some suppose. Tents are seldom used by travellers but in long journeys, or for women. A party, composed almost exclusively of men, and having only a comparatively short distance to go, in the finest seasons of the year, would despise the luxury and parade of tents, which also would have greatly increased the expense, as cattle would have been necessary to carry them.

† Luke ii. 44. ‡ Exod. xii. 18, xiii. 6, 7; Lev. xxiii 6; Num. xxviii. 17. § 1 Cor. v. 7.

|| Exod. xii. 1—6. None but male victims were allowed. Herodotus says the Egyptians sacrificed none but male victims (Euterpe, 41), whereas females were preferred by most other nations. Many have thought that the selection of a ram was designed to cast contempt upon the Egyptian worship rendered to that creature when the sun entered Aries, which was about the time of the Hebrew festival. Other designed oppositions to the Egyptian forms of sacrifice have also been found in the manner in which the passover victim was prepared; but they seem little better than conjectures. The Jewish writers inform us that it became usual to keep the selected ram tied to the bed-post of the person who proposed to offer it, from the tenth to the fourteenth, that it might be under constant observation.

¶ Deut. xvi. 2, 56. ** Exod. xii. 7. †† John xix. 36.

first blessed it, and then distributed it to all who are seated around him, so that each one might receive a part;* and each was at liberty to dip it, before eating, into a vessel of sauce.† There were four cups of wine ordinarily drunk at this supper, two before and two after meat. With the second, the two first hymns of what was called the lesser *Hallel*, being Psalms cxiii. and cxiv., were sung or chanted. The third cup, being the first after supper, was called the cup of blessing,‡ because over it they blessed God, or said grace after meat. This was followed by a fourth and last cup,§ over which they completed the hymn of praise, formed by the remainder of the *lesser Hallel*,‖ and thus the feast concluded. But it is said that a fifth cup of wine might be drunk by those who wished to repeat the great Hallel, which is generally understood to be Psalm cxxxvi. The wine was red, mixed with water.

The Passover was immediately followed by the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which lasted seven days, so that the two together seemed to make one feast of eight days, and were, in fact, popularly so considered, the names being often interchanged, so that the Passover day was sometimes considered as the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, and, on the other hand, the whole was often called the Passover Feast.¶ The first and last days of these seven were to be kept as Sabbaths, save that only *servile* labour was interdicted which allowed food to be cooked. But no suspension of labour was *required* on the intermediate five days, which were distinguished chiefly by the abstinence from leavened bread, and by the unusual number of offerings at the tabernacle or temple, and of sacrifices for sin.** The sixteenth of Abib, or the second day of Unleavened Bread, was distinguished by the offering of a barley-sheaf, as an introduction to the barley-harvest, which was ripe about this time, accompanied by a particular sacrifice, described in Lev. xxiii. 9-14.

It appears that those whose occasions required it were allowed to return home immediately after they had eaten the Passover, without staying through the week of unleavened bread.†† Michaelis imagines, with great probability, that this indulgence was granted for this reason; that, if the month Abib ‡‡ happened to fall late, the season would be so far advanced by the fourteenth that the barley-harvest would be quite ripe for the sickle in the week commencing with the fifteenth, in consequence of which the collection of the crop would have been much hindered by an obligatory stay at the seat of the tabernacle. Thus, for instance, if the month Abib began on April seventeenth, the festival would not commence till the first of May, by which time the harvest is always ready to commence in the southern parts of Palestine.

2. *The Feast of Pentecost* is called by various names in the Sacred Writings; as the *feast of weeks*,§§ because of its being celebrated a week of weeks, or seven weeks, after the feast of unleavened bread; the *feast of harvest*,‖‖ and also the *day of first fruits*,¶¶ for this was properly the harvest festival at which the Israelites were to offer thanksgivings to God for the bounties of harvest, and to present to him the first fruits thereof in bread baked of the new corn.*** It seems, in fact, that the barley harvest commenced about the Passover, and the wheat harvest ended at the Pentecost in Palestine, where, as in Egypt, the barley is ripe considerably earlier than the wheat.

This festival lasted for seven days, during which many holocausts and offerings for sin were sacrificed. In later times many Jews from foreign countries came to Jerusalem on this joyful occasion.††† Even at that time, and still more since then, a greater degree of relative importance seems to have been attached to this festival than appears to have been designed by the law. It was discovered that the date, fifty days after the Passover, coincided with the delivery of the law from Mount Sinai, which was fifty days after the departure from Egypt, and, consequently, after the first Passover. Hence, by degrees, instead of resting on the ground on which Moses placed it, the festival was turned into a commemoration of that great event.

3. *Feast of Tabernacles.*—This feast was instituted in memory of the journey through the

* Matt. xxvi. 26; Mark xiv. 22; Luke xxii. 19; 1 Cor. xi. 23, 24.
† Matt. xxvi. 21—25; Mark xiv. 18—21; John xiii. 26. ‡ 1 Cor. x. 16.
§ Matt. xxvi. 27; Mark xiv. 23; Luke xxii. 20. ‖ Matt. xxvi. 30; Mark xiv. 26.
¶ Compare Exod. xii. 18; Num. xxviii. 16, 17; Matt. xxvi. 17; Mark xiv. 12. ** Num. xxviii. 16—25.
†† Deut. xvi. 7. ‡‡ *Ear-moon*, because ripe ears of corn could always be had in that month.
§§ Exod. xxxiv. 22; Deut. xvi. 10, 16. ‖‖ Exod. xxiii. 16. ¶¶ Num. xvi. 26.
*** Exod. xxiii. 16; Lev. xxiii. 14—21; Num. xxviii. 26—31. ††† Joseph. de Bell. ii. 3. Compare Acts ii. 3—15.

Arabian wilderness, and therefore the people, during its continuance, dwelt in booths. This lasted seven days, from the 15th to the 22nd of the seventh month, Tishri (October). It is usual to state that another object of this feast was as a Feast of In-gathering, to return thanks, and to rejoice for the completed vintage and gathering in of the fruits. But a close examination will make it probable that this was the separate object of the eighth day, which was added to the seven: for it was only during the seven days that the people were to dwell in booths. Being thus closely connected, they got to be regarded as one festival, and the names were confounded and interchanged, as in the analogous case of the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread. Instead, therefore, of regarding this as one festival of eight days, with two names and two objects, it seems best to regard it as a union of two festivals with different names and objects, the one of seven days and the other of one day.*

As in the other festivals of a week's duration, the first and last days were to be observed as Sabbaths, with the exception that only *servile* labour was interdicted.† On the other five days any kind of work might be executed. During all the seven the people were to live in booths made of branches of several sorts of trees, which, as mentioned in Lev. xxiii. 40, are the palm, the willow, and two others, which seem to denote "beautiful trees,"‡ and any "thick or bushy wood,"§ rather than any particular species. Those named in Nehem. viii. 15 are different, and it seems reasonable to conclude that it was not the intention of the law to compel the use of any particular species, but only of such as were suitable for the purpose and could be easily procured. It is not expressly said in the law that the booths were to be made with those branches, though the language of the text,‖ with the context, obviously leads to that conclusion. It was so understood in the time of Nehemiah. But the Sadducees and Pharisees, in later days, split on this point; the former understanding that the booths were to be made of the boughs, while the latter contended that they were to be borne rejoicingly in the hands. The latter practice prevailed in the time of Christ, as it does to this day. The Karaites, however, follow the interpretation of the Sadducees, which seems to be the right one, although it must be confessed that the Israelites did not in the Arabian wilderness dwell in green booths, but in tents. It seems that the people often made their booths on the flat roofs of their houses.¶ More public sacrifices were to be offered on this festival than on any of the others, as may be seen in Num. xxix. 12—39. This feast was celebrated with more of outward glee than any others, though without intemperance, to which the Hebrews, as a nation, do not appear to have been ever much addicted. The ceremonies of parading in procession with branches, chanting hosannas, and of drawing water from the pool of Siloam, to pour out, mixed with wine, on the sacrifice as it lay on the altar, existed in the time of Christ, and before; but they have no such connexion with the law of Moses as to require particular notice in this place.

The eighth day, which we regard as the proper *Feast of In-gathering*, was kept as a Sabbath (and sometimes must actually have been one), like the first of the tabernacle feasts. Notwithstanding its being a distinct festival, the sacrifices for it were less than those of any of the preceding seven days.**

The important influence of these festivals, involving the meeting of the mass of the male population in one place three times every year, cannot be too highly estimated. The journey itself, taking place at the finest seasons of the year, was less likely to be considered as a grievance than as a recreative excursion, in so small a country as that which the Hebrews were destined to occupy. The primary design of these re-unions appears to have been to counteract the dividing tendency of the separation into clans, or tribes, by bringing them into contact on an equal footing, under circumstances calculated to bring before them the conviction of their common origin and common objects, sons of the same father, worshippers of the same God, and heirs of the same promises. The beginnings of idolatry were also likely to be checked

* Exod. xxiii. 16; Lev. xxiii. 34, 36, 39, 42, 43; Deut. xvi. 13—16; Neh. viii. 18; John vii. 2, 37.

† Lev. xxiii. 36, 38.

‡ The Jews will have this to mean the citron.

§ The Jews say it means particularly the myrtle, which does not seem unlikely.

‖ Lev. xxiii. 40.

¶ Neh. viii. 16.

** Num. xxix. 36.

by the frequent renewal of these acts of worship and homage. Persons of distant towns and different tribes met together on terms of brotherhood and fellowship; and old relations were renewed, and new ones formed.

Several sections are devoted by Michaelis to the statement of the political and other advantages resulting from these festivals. Among other considerations, he observes, that if any of the tribes happened to be jealous of each other, or, as was sometimes the case, involved in civil war, still their meeting together in one place for the purposes of religion and sociality had a tendency to prevent their being completely alienated, and forming themselves into two or more unconnected states; and even though this had at any time happened, it gave them an opportunity of again cementing their differences, and re-uniting. This is so correctly true, that the separation of the ten tribes from the tribe of Judah, under Rehoboam and Jeroboam, could never have been permanent, had not the latter abrogated one part of the Law of Moses relative to festivals.

Another effect of these meetings regarded the internal commerce of the Israelites. From the annual conventions of the whole people of any country for religious purposes, there generally arise, even without any direct intention on their part, annual fairs and internal commerce. Such festivals have always been attended with this effect. The famous old fair near Hebron arose from the congregation of pilgrims to the terebinth-tree of Abraham. The yearly fairs among the Germans had a similar origin. Among the Mahomedans similar festivals have always had the same results. Witness the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, which, in spite of many adverse circumstances, has given birth to one of the greatest markets in the world. Now the very same effects, and to a still higher degree, must, even without any intention on the part of the legislator, have resulted from the high festivals of the Hebrews, to which the whole people were bound to assemble; and more particularly as far as regards internal tradê. Let us only figure to ourselves what would necessarily follow from such festivals being established. Every man would bring along with him every portable article which he could spare, and which he wished to turn into money; and as several individuals would go from the same place, they would contrive various expedients to render their goods portable; and this would be the more readily suggested by the habit of taking things, some of them needing carriage, to Jerusalem, as dues and offerings. Nor are means of conveyance expensive in the East, as they consist not, as with us, of waggons and horses, but of asses and camels—beasts which are highly serviceable in promoting the internal traffic of Syria and Arabia. There could never be any want of buyers, where the whole people were convened; and the wholesale merchants would soon find it for their advantage to attend, and purchase the commodities offered for sale by individuals, especially manufactured goods. Whoever wished to purchase any particular articles would await the festivals in order to have a choice; and this, too, would lead great merchants to attend with all manner of goods for sale, for which they could hope to find purchasers.

However, therefore, Moses may have desired to discourage the Israelites from engaging in *foreign* commerce, his measures were, in this instance at least, and whether intended or not, highly favourable to the *internal* intercourse and traffic of the country.

4. *The Day of Atonement.*—This was an annual *Fast*, and the only one prescribed by the law, however fasts may abound in the present calendar of the Jews. It occurred on the fifth day before the Feast of Tabernacles, or on the tenth day of the seventh month, Tishri (October). On this day they were to abstain from all servile work, to take no food "from evening to evening," during which they were to "afflict their souls."

The sacrificial services of this day were the most solemn in all the year, and deserve to be considered with much attention.

The sacred services of the day were conducted by the high priest himself, and the following ceremonies, which differed from those used on other occasions, were performed by him alone.

When he had washed himself in water, he put on the dress of white linen which he wore only on this day. Then he conducted to the altar a bullock destined to be slain for the sins of himself and his family; also two goats for the sins of the people, the one of which was

selected by lot to be sacrificed to God; the other was permitted to make an unmolested escape.* He proceeded to slay the bullock for his own sins, and the goat on which the lot had fallen to be offered for the sins of the people. He then filled a censer with burning coals from the altar, and putting two handfuls of incense into a vase, he bore them into the Holy of Holies, which on this day only he might enter.† Having here poured the incense on the coals, he returned, took the blood of the bullock and the goat, and went again into the Most Holy Place. There he, with his finger, first sprinkled the blood of the bullock, and afterwards of the goat, upon the lid of the ark, and seven times also he sprinkled it on the floor before the ark.

He then returned from the Most Holy into the Holy Place, or sanctuary, and besmeared the "horns" of the golden altar with the blood of the bullock and the goat, and scattered the blood seven times over the surface of the altar.

All this was done as an expiation for the uncleanness and the sins of the children of Israel during the past year.‡

The high priest then went out into the court of the tabernacle, and placed his hands with great solemnity on the head of the scape-goat, which symbolically represented that the animal was thereby laden with the sins of the people. It was then delivered to a man who led it away into the wilderness, and there let it go free, to signify the liberation of the Israelites from the punishment due to their sins. But the goat which was slain for the sins of the people, and the bullock slain for those of the high priest, were designed to signify that they were guilty, and that they merited punishment; and they were burnt whole, beyond the limits of the camp or of the city.§

After this the high-priest, putting off his white vestments, and assuming the splendid robes of his office, sacrificed a burnt-offering, and then offered another sin-offering, with which the striking services of this day concluded.‖

Having noticed the weekly, monthly, and annual feasts, we have now to direct our attention to those extraordinary festivals which were only celebrated after the recurrence of a certain number of years.

The Sabbatic Year.—The *Sabbath*, or "rest," ordained for men and cattle every seventh day, was extended to the land itself every seventh year, during which the owners were to let it lie fallow. There was no sowing or reaping, the vines and the olives were not pruned, there was no vintage, no gathering of fruits, even of that which grew wild; for all spontaneous productions were to be left to the poor, the wayfaring stranger, and the cattle.

This year commenced with the first day of the month Tishri, which was the first of the civil and the seventh of the sacred year. The Feast of Tabernacles commenced on the fifteenth of the same month, and on that occasion, *in this year*, the law was to be publicly read for eight days together in the tabernacle or temple.¶ Moses manifests great earnestness in giving this command, and exhorts not only the men, but women, children, and even strangers, to avail themselves of this opportunity of instruction in the law. It is observable, indeed, that no other public reading of the law than this is commanded by the law itself.

On account of no income arising from the soil during this year, no debts could be collected in it.** They were not, however, cancelled, as many writers have imagined; for we find in Deut. xv. 9, that the Hebrews were admonished not to deny money to the poor on account of the approach of the sabbatical year, during which it could not be exacted; but nothing beyond this can be educed from the passage. Nor does it seem that servants were, as usually stated, manumitted on this periodical seventh year, but on the seventh year of their individual service.††

It is not to be supposed that this year of rest to the land was necessarily spent by the

* Lev. xvi. 6—10.

† When the tabernacle was to be removed and set up again, the inner sanctuary might safely be entered, but not at other times.

‡ Lev. xvi. 11—19.

§ Lev. xvi. 20—22, 26—28.

‖ Lev. xvi. 1—34; Num. xxix. 1—11; Jahn's B. A. Th. iii. sect. 76.

¶ Deut. xxxi. 10—13.

** Deut. xv. 1, 2.

†† Exod. xxi. 2; Deut. xv. 12; Jer. xxxiv. 14.

Hebrews in idleness. They could fish, hunt, take care of their bees and flocks, repair their buildings and furniture, manufacture cloths of wool, linen, and of the hair of goats and camels, and carry on their usual traffic.

To guard the Hebrews against the fear of want from this neglect of the land, the command for this observance was accompanied by the promise that the lands should have a threefold produce on the sixth year, sufficient to supply the inhabitants till the fruits of a harvest sown in the eighth year were ripe. As, therefore, the sabbath of the seventh year had the same reference as that of the seventh day to the creation of the world, this institution sensibly demonstrated to the Israelites, that the God who had made them the peculiar objects, of his care, was not only the Creator but the Governor of the earth; and the required reliance upon his Providence, in that character, necessarily must result from, and must therefore have formed a test of, their true belief in these great doctrines, to preserve which their existence as a nation was given to them. The institution also demonstrated that not they, but God was the lord of the soil, which they held only of his bounty. The Israelites failed under this test; which, it must be confessed, was not an easy one, when we consider how hard a thing it is to exhibit a *practical* belief in the providence of God. Their failure in this was one of the national sins for which the Israelites were sent into that captivity which Moses had foretold as the consequence of their disobedience, and during which the land enjoyed the number of sabbaths of which it had been defrauded by the rebellion and unbelief of its inhabitants; or, in other words, the years of their captivity corresponded to the number of the neglected sabbatic years; and as these were seventy, this would carry us back about 500 years, to the commencement of the monarchy, as the time at which this observance was discontinued.* After the captivity, it was more scrupulously observed.† The year B.C. 1589 was, probably, the first general sabbatical year, being the seventh year after the second division of the conquered lands.‡

The Year of Jubilee was a more solemn sabbatical year, to be held every seventh sabbatical year, at the end of forty-nine years, or the fiftieth current.§

The return of this great day was announced throughout the land on the day of atonement, that is, on the tenth of the month *Tishri.*

Besides the regulations appertaining to the sabbatic year, there were others which exclusively pertained to the year of jubilee.

All the bond-servants of Hebrew origin obtained their freedom in this year, even those who, at the end of their six years' servitude, had relinquished their claims to liberty, and whose ears had been bored in token of perpetual servitude.‖ All the fields throughout the country, and the houses in the cities and villages of the Levites and priests, which had been sold in the preceding years, were returned in the year of jubilee to the sellers, with the exception of those that had been consecrated to God, and had not been redeemed before the return of the year.¶

Debtors for the most part pledged or mortgaged their land to the creditor, and left it to his use till the time of payment, so that it was, in effect, sold to the creditor, and was accordingly sold to the debtor on the year of jubilee. In other words, the debts for which land was pledged were cancelled, the same as those of persons who had recovered their freedom, after having been sold into slavery, on account of not being able to pay. Hence it usually happened in the later period of the Jewish history, as we learn from Josephus, that there was a general cancelling of debts.**

One of the primary objects of this institution was, avowedly, to impress upon the Hebrews the conviction that the Lord was the sovereign proprietor of the soil, by bringing pointedly before them, in the most public and general manner, that they were His tenants in the land, and therefore could not sell a perpetual right which they did not themselves possess. This

Lev. xxxvi. 34, 35; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21. † Joseph. Antiq. xi. 8, 5.
‡ Exod. xxxii. 10; Lev. xxv. 1—7, xxvi. 33—35. Jahn's B. A. Th. i. sect. 38, Th. iii. sect. 69; Hales, ii. 253.
§ Lev. xxv. 8—11; Joseph. Antiq. iii. 12, 3. ‖ Lev. xxv. 39—46; Jer. xxxiv. 8, *et seq.*
¶ Lev. xxv. 10, 13—17, 24, 28, xxvii. 16—21. ** Antiq. iii. 12, 3; Jahn's B. A. Th. iii. sect. 70.

seems to us distinctly announced when it is said, "The land shall not be sold for ever: *for the land is mine,* and *ye* are strangers and sojourners with me." *

The other and political objects may be taken as stated by Jennings :—

"The political design was to prevent the too great oppression of the poor, as well as their being liable to perpetual slavery. By this means the rich were prevented from accumulating lands upon lands, and a kind of equality was preserved in all their families. Never was there any people so effectually secured of their liberty and property as the Israelites were: God not only engaging to protect these invaluable blessings by his providence, that they should not be taken away from them by others, but providing in a particular manner, by this law, that they should not be thrown away through their own folly, since the property which every man or family had in their dividend of the land of Canaan could not be sold, or any way alienated, above half a century. By this means, also, the distinction of tribes was preserved; for this law rendered it necessary for them to keep genealogies of their families, that they might be able, when there was occasion on the jubilee year, to prove their right to the inheritance of their ancestors."†

These institutions were, as far as we know, peculiar to the law of Moses; and this peculiarity belongs to fewer of his laws than is usually imagined. Like many others in the Mosaical code, they are to be regarded with reference to their peculiar fitness to the peculiar objects of the system: from which, in principle, they do not admit of separation, without great absurdity or violence, to be applied to the purposes of general legislation. If anything were wanting to support the view we have taken, as to the limited and peculiar object of the Mosaical legislation, we need but point to these two institutions—the sabbatic year and the jubilee,—which are admirable, and even beautiful, when regarded with reference to their fitness to, and support of, the system to which they belonged; but which, it does not require two words to show, were inapplicable to, and impossible under, any other system that ever existed.

V. Sacred Acts.—Most of that which remains to be stated under this title may be comprehended under the heads,—1. Purifications, 2. Vows:—

1. *Purifications.*—These formed a very important branch of the ceremonial law. Their object seems to have been two-fold, one to enforce and keep up the reverence which the people owed to their God and King, and the other to provide for their health, and compel attention to cleanliness. Hence no one could appear before God with his offering who was not previously cleansed from his outward or ceremonial impurities; by which he was not only taught a becoming reverence of God, but might be symbollically taught that, without inward purity, he could not be acceptable to God. This was understood; and hence washing became among the Hebrews a symbol of innocence, whence the Psalmist was led to say, "I will wash mine hands *in innocency*; so will I compass thine altar." And with reference to the second object, it is obvious that the existence of so many circumstances which rendered a person unclean, must have made him heedful to avoid whatever might lead to the inconvenient condition of ceremonial impurity; while whatever tended to produce contagious disorders among the people was, by being made a ceremonial uncleanness, a constant object of suspicion and watchfulness.

"Uncleanness was not accounted a Sin, with the exception of that which was expressly interdicted; and that by which the high-priest and Nazarites were contaminated, from whom all such defilements were to be removed. But the neglect of purification, when uncleanness had occurred, was an error (technically, a *trespass* or a *sin*) which caused an exclusion from all intercourse with the rest of the people. Uncleanness ceased of itself at the end of a certain period, provided the unclean person, at the expiration of that time, washed his body and his clothes. But in some instances unclean persons were unable to purge themselves from the stain of their defilement until they had first gone through certain ceremonies of

* Lev. xxv. 23.

† Jewish Antiq. iii. 10. The passage is an amplification of what Godwin says in his 'Moses and Aaron,' pp. 134—136.

purification prescribed in the ritual. For instance, a person who had been rendered unclean by the touch of a dead body, of a sepulchre, or the bones of a dead person,* was sprinkled on the third and seventh day by a clean person with hyssop, dipped in water mixed with the ashes of a red heifer.† When this was done, he washed his body and clothes, and on the seventh day he was clean. Tents, houses, and furniture contaminated by the dead were to be purified in the same manner."‡

Purification of Lepers.—There are eleven species of legal impurity mentioned in the law, to which many others were added by the later Jews. But the only one we shall particularly notice is leprosy, the laws of Moses bearing on which intimate the most profound attention to the public health, and the most judicious precautions for its preservation.

This dreadful disorder, in its various kinds, which are minutely and exactly discriminated in the law, offers some very serious characteristics. It was so far *hereditary* that some families were more affected by it than others; it was also *infectious*, and has generally been held *incurable* in the East, whence there are no directions in the law for its cure, but only to prevent its spread among the people.

After the lapse of several thousand years, leprosy is still common in Syria. It was endemic in Palestine, the country to which Moses conducted the Israelites; and in Egypt, where they had previously dwelt, it is said to be still more frequent and virulent. To this the climate no doubt in some degree contributed: but other causes besides this may, at the time the law was given, have tended to increase its influence among the Israelites. They were poor, and had been oppressed, and cutaneous disorders, and indeed all kinds of infections prevail most among the poor, because they cannot keep themselves cleanly, and at a distance from infected persons. However, that the disorder in its various kinds did then, and thenceforward for many ages, exist very largely among them, is quite certain.

The measures taken by Moses to put a check upon the spread of leprosy formed a very strict system of separation and supervision. All contact with lepers was effectually checked by such contact being made a ceremonial uncleanness, which subjected the party to great inconvenience, even if no evil consequences followed. Vigilant attention to the manifestations of the disease itself was secured by its being declared a legal impurity of the first class, and as such put under the supervision of the priesthood. The thirteenth chapter of Leviticus lays down very explicit and minute rules for the purpose of distinguishing between those signs which are proofs of the actual existence of leprosy, and those that are harmless and result from some other cause. These rules were for the guidance of the priest, on whom rested the responsibility of deciding whether or not the suspected leper was in a really leprous condition. Lepers were obliged to wear a peculiar dress, and to live apart, outside the camp, and, in the end, outside of towns, in a situation suitably detached, where they might have intercourse among themselves, but not with clean persons. From such they were to keep their distance;

* Again we are reminded that man was ceremoniously the most unclean of all animals, manifestly to render human sacrifice impossible under the law.

† "The ashes of the heifer were prepared in a singular manner. The animal, which was to be of a red, or rather yellowish, colour, inclining to a brown, free from all defect, and which had never submitted to the yoke, was led to the priest. She was then conducted out of the city, or encampment, as the case might be, by some other person, and slain. The priest dipped his finger in the blood, and sprinkled it seven times towards the sanctuary. Afterwards the heifer was burnt whole, in the same place, the priest, in the meantime, heaping upon the altar piles of wood, and then casting hyssop and scarlet wool into the fire. The persons who performed the various offices of leading out, slaying, and burning the heifer, and of carrying away the ashes, also the priest who officiates, were unclean until the evening." (Num. xix. 6, 8, 10, 21.)—JAHN. This author adds that there does not appear to have been any dangerous superstition connected with this rite. Most writers, however, find it difficult to make out the significancy of some of these particulars without supposing that they had reference, by antagonism, to some of the idolatrous practices of Egypt, as that it was a *heifer*, because the Egyptians held this animal to be sacred, and worshipped Isis under its form; and *red*, because red in animals was to the Egyptians a colour hated and abominable, who held Typhon, their Satan, to be of that colour, and, therefore, appeased his wrath by the offering of *red bulls*. We have no doubt this ceremony (it was *not* a sacrifice) was designed to keep the Hebrews from some of the curious idolatries of Egypt, and from some of the idolatrous or superstitious modes of purification which they had witnessed and approved in that country; but we know not if they can now be identified. Lightfoot (*Temple Service*, xvii. 2) informs us that nine of these heifers were slain between the time of Moses and the destruction of the second temple; one by Eleazar, the son of Aaron, one by Ezra, and the rest afterwards; that is, two in the thousand first years, and seven in the last five hundred years. This is likely enough, for the ridiculous, super-legal ceremoniousness of the Jews increased in about this proportion, rendering necessary more frequent resort to the ashes of the red heifer for purification.

‡ Num. xix. 11—22; Jahn's B.A. Th. iii. sect. 107.

and if any one drew near to them unawares, they were to announce their condition and proximity by crying out "Unclean! unclean!"

Most nations believed this disorder to be incurable, and supposed it inflicted by the gods, by whom only it could be cured. The same notion appears to have been entertained by the Israelites;* and the instances in which this disease is represented as being inflicted upon individuals by the Lord, to punish them for their sins, were calculated to strengthen this impression.

When, however, a person was reported to be healed of his leprosy, a priest went out of the camp (or city), and subjected him to a very strict examination. If no signs of the disorder appeared upon him, the priest sent a person to bring two living birds (doves or young pigeons), cedar wood, scarlet wool, and hyssop, with which he performed the ceremonies of purification, to admit the party to the privileges of the Hebrew church and community. He slew one of the birds, and received its blood in an earthen vessel. Into this he dipped the cedar wood, the scarlet wool, and hyssop, and therewith sprinkled, seven times, the once leprous person. The other bird was then permitted to escape, as a symbol that the man was now free of his leprosy. The subject of these ceremonies having then washed his body and his clothes, and shaved himself, was accounted clean; but was not permitted to enter the encampment or the city until the seventh day from this time. On that day he shaved off, not only the beard and eyebrows, but the hair from every part of the body, and was then esteemed perfectly purified.†

The same day he was to bring his offering of two rams and a sheep, with meal and oil; but if he were poor, two doves and two young pigeons might be substituted for the sheep and the second ram. The man and his offerings were then presented before God, by the priest. One of the rams was then offered as a trespass-offering, and with its blood, and with the oil, were performed the significant and peculiar ceremonies described in Lev. xiv. 10—18; after which the sheep was slain as a sin-offering, and the other ram as a burnt-offering.‡

Leprosy of Clothes.—The regulations on this subject show the minute care with which all the circumstances tending to the nurture and propagation of the infectious virus was watched by the law; to appreciate which properly it is necessary to recollect how little attention has, until within a comparatively recent period, been paid to such matters in any country.

With reference to the statutes on this subject, Michaelis very justly observes, "When we hear of the leprosy of clothes and houses, we must not be so simple as to imagine it the very same disease which is termed *leprosy* in man. Men, clothes, and stones have not the same sorts of diseases; but the names of human diseases are by analogy applied to the diseases of other things." He mentions instances from Hasselquist in which the name leprosy is in Egypt and Syria applied to diseases *in trees.*

The "clothes leprosy" is described, in Lev. xiii. 47—59, as consisting of green or reddish spots, which remain in spite of washing, and continue to spread, so that the cloth becomes bald, or bare, sometimes on one side and sometimes on the other. It is not easy to identify this disease in clothes, or to say exactly in what it consisted. The Jewish writers themselves are rather at a loss on the subject; and most of them rest in the conclusion that it was peculiar to themselves, and unknown to other nations; but there are some (as Abarbanel) who conclude that the disease was derived from the cloth having been touched or used by leprous persons, and imbibed from them the purulent matter in which the infection lay. Michaelis, however, guided by the information which he received from a woollen manufacturer, supposed the disease to have arisen in woollen cloth from the use of the wool of a sheep that had died of disease; which, when worn next the skin (as it often is in the East), is very apt to produce vermin. He could obtain no information with respect to linen and leather, which are also mentioned in the law.

Clothes suspected to be thus tainted were to be inspected by the priest. If they were found

* 2 Kings, v. 7. † Lev. xiv. 1—9.

‡ Lev. xiv. 19—32; compare Matt. viii. 2—4; Mark i. 40—44; Luke xvii. 12—14.

to be corroded by the leprosy, they were to be burnt; but if, after being washed, the plague was found to have departed from them, they were to be pronounced clean.

The House Leprosy.—Most of the preceding observations apply also to this disease in the walls of houses, which is described in Lev. xiv. 33—37, as consisting of greenish or reddish spots, that appear on the wall, and continue to spread wider and wider. Michaelis considers it to be the same as the saltpetre, which sometimes attacks and corrodes houses that stand in damp situations, and which may have been hurtful in Palestine, although not attended with any injury to health in northern Europe. What was a mere conjecture of his has since been rendered very probable by the fact that the deserted and ruined houses in the country beyond Jordan are so impregnated with saltpetre, that the collection of it to make gunpowder forms almost the only business (not agricultural) carried on in that almost desolate region. This has been noticed in the other division of this work (Physical History, p. lxx.).

When a house was suspected to be thus tainted, the priest was to examine it, and ordered it to be shut up seven days. If he then found that the signs of the "plague" had not spread, he ordered it to be shut up seven days more. At the expiration of that time he paid another visit, and if he found the infected spot *dim*, or extinct, he caused that part of the wall to be taken out, and removed to an unclean place, mended the wall, and caused the whole house to be newly plastered. It was then shut up for another seven days; and if he then found that the plague had broken out anew, he caused the whole house to be pulled down. But if there were no such appearance, he pronounced it clean, and the same ceremony was performed on the occasion as on the purification of a leprous man; and this served to apprise every one that the suspected house was not infected, thus freeing the neighbourhood from any apprehensions which may have been entertained.

VOWS.*—Vows were not of divine appointment, but originated with men themselves, and were solemn promises made by persons to consecrate something to God, or to do something in his service, and to his honour, which without such promises they did not feel bound to perform. The earliest vow of this kind is that of Jacob, mentioned in Gen. xxviii. 22.

Moses confirmed the vows which had been made in ancient times; and which, having been observed in subsequent ages, had acquired in some measure prescriptive authority. But he does not appear to have encouraged the making of new vows by individuals, although he insisted on a scrupulous fulfilment of them when made.† It should be observed, however, that he permitted in certain cases the redemption of a vow,‡ and conferred the power on a father, or a master, or a husband of annulling the vows of a daughter, a wife, or a slave.§ Another circumstance essential to the validity of a vow was, that it should be audibly uttered, and confirmed by an oath;‖ and this was obviously calculated to relieve conscientious persons from any doubts they might entertain as to whether what they had *thought of* in their hearts was a bare intention or a complete and obligatory vow. Such uncertainty would be prevented by uttered words. It was also made essential that anything devoted to God by a vow should be honestly acquired. It is well known that in ancient times many public prostitutes devoted a part of their impure earnings to their gods. This is expressly forbidden by Moses.¶

Vows were either (1) *Affirmative* (*Nederim*),** strictly so called, by which property of various kinds, and men themselves, might be consecrated to God, and which were capable of redemption (with the exception of what was denoted by the vow called *Cherem*, and of animals proper for sacrifices); or (2) *Negative*, by which abstinence was promised from certain things in themselves lawful. The principal in this last class was the vow of the Nazarite.

1. *Affirmative Vows.*—By vows of this kind, not only property of various descriptions, as money, lands, houses, and animals, clean and unclean,†† but servants also, sons, and the person himself who made the vow, might be consecrated to God. These are all mentioned under a name common to any sacred gift, *Korban*.‡‡

* The substanc of what follows on the subject of vows is from Jahn, with some curtailments and some additions.

† Deut. xxiii. 21—24. ‡ Lev. xxvii. 1—25. § Num. xxx. 2—16.

‖ Num. xxx. 3, 11, 14; compare Deut. xxiii. 23; Judges xi. 35, 36; Psa. xlvi. 14. ¶ Deut. xxiii. 18.

** נדרים

†† *Clean* and *unclean* means no more than *fit* or *unfit* for food.

‡‡ קרבן. See Joseph. Antiq. iv. 4, 4; Mark vii. 11.

Animals which were fit for sacrifices, and which were devoted to God by this vow, were to be sacrificed; but those which were excluded from the altar were to be sold according to the valuation of the priest: they could be redeemed, however, by the addition of the fifth part of the valuation. The men who were thus devoted became servants in the tabernacle or temple, unless they were redeemed. Many lands and houses, which had been made the subjects of this vow, became the property of the tabernacle or the temple, but the lands might be redeemed before the year of jubilee.*

2. *The Vow called Cherem.*—This vow of "*the accursed thing*" was not originally introduced by Moses, but was an ancient custom which he thought proper to retain, in order that his system might not be deprived of the good which might result from an example of formidable severity. He gives no regulations concerning it, but speaks of it as a thing already known and in use.† If the vow of Cherem were uttered in respect to an enemy, it implied the widest and most unsparing destruction; and it was sacrilege for the conquering army to appropriate to itself any of the plunder.‡ In a few instances it appears, however, that the flocks and some other of the spoils were not destroyed.§ By this vow of Cherem, otherwise called the irrevocable curse, sometimes fields, animals, and human individuals were devoted. It was designed in its operation upon men to bear only upon the wicked, who were thereby made an example to others.‖

2. *Negative Vows: the Nazarite, &c.*—A negative vow, as previously stated, was a promise to abstain from certain things not forbidden by the law. Josephus reports ¶ that there were in his time many, particularly those oppressed by sickness or by adverse fortune, who vowed to abstain from wine, to go with the head shaven, and to spend the time in prayer thirty days previously to their offering sacrifices. This agrees with what we read in the New Testament,** but although proper to mention here, we find nothing of it in the law of Moses.

But the Nazarite, on the contrary, vowed to let the hair grow, to abstain not only from wine and all inebriating drink, but from vinegar likewise; to eat no grapes; and to beware of any contamination from corpses, bones, and sepulchres; and not to indulge in mourning even on the deaths of his *nearest* relatives. In some cases the child was bound by the vow of a Nazarite even before his birth. This was the case in respect to Samson and John the Baptist.†† This vow sometimes continued through life, but was generally limited in its operation to a definite period. The customs relative to the Nazarite existed before the time of Moses, who, in Lev. xxv. 25, borrowed expressions from them before the promulgation of his law on the subject in Num. vi. Michaelis thinks they were of Egyptian origin; and that Moses in his laws only gives certain injunctions concerning them, partly to establish the ceremonies and laws of such vows, and partly to prevent people from making them to, or letting their hair grow in honour of, any other than the true God.‡‡

If Nazarites, whether male or female (for the vow might be made by either), were unexpectedly contaminated, they were to be purified not only in the manner already mentioned, but with additions peculiar to themselves (Num. vi. 9-12): the hair was to be shaven, and the Nazariteship had to be commenced anew.

At the expiration of the period fixed by the vow of one who had engaged to follow this mode of life only for a limited time, he appeared at the door of the tabernacle with certain sacrifices and offerings, prescribed by the law,§§ when his hair was cut off, and cast into the fire where his thank-offering was burning. He then was free from his vow, and once more indulged himself with wine at the feast which was prepared from the thank-offering.

As in some instances the Nazarite was too poor to meet the whole expense of the offerings required on this occasion, other parties more affluent became sharers in it, and in this way became parties in the vow. This explains Acts xxi. 23, 24.

In concluding this sketch of what is called the *Ceremonial Law*, we may be permitted to

* Lev. xxvii. 1—24. † Exod. xvii. 14; Num. xxi. 2; Deut. ii. 32, 34, iii. 1—8, xiii. 14, 15; comp. Judges xx. 47, 48.
‡ Josh. vi. 17—19, vii. 1, 26 § Deut. ii. 32, 34, iii. 1—8; Josh. viii. 2. ‖ Compare 1 Sam. xiv. 24, &c.
¶ De Bello, ii. 15, 1. ** Acts xviii. 18. †† Judges xiii. 2—5, 12—23; Luke i. 13—15.
‡‡ Mich. Art 145. §§ Num. vi. 13—21.

remind the reader that a far greater number of principles and applications of general and political law are included than the mere title would suggest. In fact, a view of the ceremonial law might be so conducted as to develope the entire organization, religious, political, and civil, of the Hebrew state. This arises from the peculiar character of the system which God deemed best suited, *under all circumstances*, as the instrumentality through which his ultimate designs might be produced.

This system was *national* in all its parts, even in its religion, and adapted to a nation peculiarly circumstanced. Moreover, it dealt with the people in their corporate capacity as the seed of Abraham, as a people miraculously ransomed from Egypt, and set apart for a peculiar purpose, and containing that promiscuous assemblage of characters and dispositions of which all political society is composed, but to whom, from the necessities of the final purpose, a fœderal holiness was ascribed, apart from any reference to individual character. In this it was essentially contrasted with the Christian system, which deals with the hearts and understandings of individual men, which requires qualities which no promiscuous or general body of men can exhibit, and which therefore goes through the earth, regardless of clime, or seed, or nation, seeking and gathering up those whose *hearts* can yield assent to the doctrines it proposes, and finds one of a city or two of a family who may be brought to *its* Zion.* These form its church; and the law by which that church is governed is spiritual, and all its sanctions are spiritual also;—and as the object of that government is not external, but inward—even the hearts on which its doctrines fall—it deals not with the political conditions, or with laws civil, criminal, or ceremonial. From all these things it is distinct and apart; and the one law by which the external relations and appearance of its subjects are governed only instructs them to keep themselves *unspotted from* the world. Hence, by its complete separation from all political forms and systems, arises its wonderful adaptation to all systems—or rather its power of action upon and through them all. For the system, and its present sanctions and final objects, being spiritual, its subjects find nothing that interferes with their subsisting political or social relations. The holiness which it requires is personal, and not such as can be corporate, and it deals with its subjects as an aggregate of individuals belonging to a kingdom not of this world.

If we *reverse* all these cirumstances we have a picture of the Hebrew church. Its kingdom *was* eminently of this world. Its design was the external and open maintenance of certain objects. Therefore the whole system was external; and although man was not left ignorant—although he could not but know—that the devoted heart was an offering with which God was well pleased, this was his individual concern, for the engagement of the affections was not an *essential* part of the system. Free room was allowed for these affections; they were encouraged as good for the individual, and acceptable to God; but for the public purposes of the system the affections were only necessary as contributing to its stability, by ensuring obedience to it. Judaism was intended to be nothing divested of its externals. Christianity is everything without externals: it is spiritual, and by virtue of its spirituality it pervades, and, in pervading, elevates, purifies, blesses all forms, without any form being essential to it.

In the Mosaical system, the church was not only connected with the state, but was identical with it. This was necessary; for it was required not only that a set of doctrines should be preserved, but that the instrumentality of their preservation should be organized and upheld. Hence the Almighty not only condescended to become to the Hebrew people *their* God, their tutelary divinity—in a peculiar and intimate sense—but he also constituted himself their King, the head of their state. The union or identity of these two characters produced and required a corresponding union or identity of the church and the state. The two were inseparable while the God was the Civil Ruler. This appears everywhere. Thus the family of Aaron were at the same time the priests of the God and the ministers of the King: thus the Levites were not only a subordinate order of priests, but a lettered aristocracy in the state; and thus the nation, besides their ordinary relation, as subjects to a king, had that fœderal holiness ascribed to them which made them a church—a nation of priests, a peculiar people: thus the tabernacle was not only the Temple of the God, but the palace of the king; and thus the

* Jer. iii. 14.

principles and many of the details of the civil and political code are bound up and embraced in the framework of the ceremonial institutions.

For this reason the first division of the three into which we have divided the subject of this chapter, has engaged far more of our attention than the other divisions will require. It was also necessary to exhibit the ceremonial framework of the system in the distinct and separate form in which it has now been shown, that the reciprocal relation of the several parts might be adequately developed, and because the details are such as could not well be wrought up with the historical narrative. With the other two divisions the case is different. The principles of details of Government will be developed to most advantage in connexion with the historical narrative; and although the system of General Law admits better than this of being dealt with separately, its principal characteristics may be effectively produced to illustrate and explain the historical narrative. And this use of it seems most in conformity with the general purpose of the present work, which is not a treatise on so large a subject as the Laws of Moses, but a History of the Jews, and of the country in which they dwelt.

For these reasons, our observations under the second and third divisions of this chapter will be comparatively brief, and will suggest principles and general views, rather than indicate specific details and developments.

Before leaving this for another branch of our inquiry, we may be permitted to advert to a few points, no suitable place for which could be found in the preceding pages.

We frequently hear of the *burdensome character of the ceremonial law*. It certainly had this character, as compared with the perfect simplicity and freedom of the Christian system; but, *as established by Moses*, it is probable that the Hebrew system was *less* burdensome than any but that which has had existence. Our impressions on this subject partly arise from our viewing these institutions in the encumbered and disfigured aspect which the Jewish system assumed in later times, when the simple text of the law had been overlaid with a dense mass of comment and exposition, which was held to be of equal force with the original text; whence resulted an enormous accumulation of observances and regulations, which in the time of Christ, and before and after, made the yoke of the law hard and its burden heavy. And while certainly the religion of Christ was a "law of liberty," compared with the most simple form of the Mosaical system, we may remember that Christ himself ascribes much of its burdensome character to the "traditions of the elders," whereby the original code had been overladen, and "made of no effect."

Reflecting on that which we have already written, we perceive that without at all intending to do so, we have exhibited the principal requirements of the system in a point of view which divests them of much of that burdensome character which they have been supposed to bear. We are persuaded that the right view of these institutions has been taken; and, if so, who is there that will say that, as compared with *any other* religious system than that under which it is our happiness to live, the sabbaths were burdensome, or the festivals, or the yearly journeys, or the tithes? The ritual of worship may appear burdensome, but the burden only lay on the Levitical tribe, which lived by the altar at which it ministered; and so far from being held burdensome by the people, it was probably the only system of worship which they could have understood, or which would have been suited to their notions and circumstances.

The laws concerning uncleanness and purifications are those which would seem the most onerous. But let us consider the important civil and social objects for which these laws were calculated, and we shall see that, by introducing this principle of religious uncleanness, and consequent purification, the Hebrew legislator was enabled to realize points similar to those which, in our own legislation, have been but imperfectly secured by enactments sufficient to occupy some twenty volumes of our statute books. By these laws the public health was carefully guarded, the removal of impurities secured, and a check was imposed upon excesses to which the Israelites were very prone. The single regulation which made it an impurity to touch a human corpse, or a grave, or the carcase of any animal not slaughtered by the knife, prevented the exposure of the dead bodies of men or animals: hence, also, their care to bury the slain after a battle, and the necessity that their cemeteries should be outside their towns.

Many of our readers, entertaining the current impression, which assigns a superlatively *burdensome* character to the Mosaical law, will be astonished to know that Maimonides contends that one of the objects of the law of Moses was *to lessen* the burden and service of religious duties; and he adds, "If anything in that law appear to us injurious and fatiguing, *it is only because we are ignorant of the rites and customs of those times.*" He was aware that a peculiarly burdensome character might be ascribed to the Mosaical system of purifications; and, therefore, after stating them, and adducing some reasons for them, he advises us again, "*carefully to study the customs of those times,*" for by such study we should find that the law offered men relief from burdensome and oppressive customs, so as not to be hindered in their usual business on account of pollutions or purifications. Most of the precepts regarding cleanness and uncleanness, he says, "regarded only the sanctuary and holy things, as it is said, 'She shall touch no hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary,'* leaving her at liberty to use all other things without sin, even whilst unclean, and to eat whatever kind of common food † she chose. But among the Zabii, in some parts of the East, females are obliged at certain times to live in separate habitations, the things on which they trod were burnt, every person speaking to them was accounted polluted, and if only the wind had blown them on to others who were pure, those persons were deemed polluted; from which we may learn how great the difference is between what they teach and what our law teaches, which allows women at such times to perform all their ordinary household duties. According to the customs of the Zabii, everything also which was separated from the body, as hair, nails, blood, &c., was considered as polluting; hence all barbers were regarded unclean from having to touch the hair and blood; and every one who suffered a razor to pass upon him was obliged to wash himself in pure and limpid spring-water. Many other tedious and wearisome ceremonies were also common amongst them."

Warburton and others have been of opinion that there may have been an original intention to train the Israelites through direct moral and doctrinal instruction, without the intervention of a ceremonial and typical system. They suppose that the delivery of the moral code contained in the decalogue, without any ritual institutions or injunctions, prior to the affair of the golden calf, and the promulgation of the ritual system immediately *after* that sad transaction, intimates that there was an alteration of plan *caused by* this demonstration of their unfitness for any other system than one of types and ceremonies.

We admit fully that the system was well adapted to their wants, their condition, and their state of mind. But was not all this known to God before? and is it quite reverent to make a system destined to endure for ages, and intended for the accomplishment of great and important objects, the result of such an incident as the worship of the golden calf? Besides, the Passover was instituted and the Sabbath given before the decalogue was delivered; and, above all, it has singularly been forgotten that, although the ritual system were not delivered until *after* the golden calf idolatry, it had been received for them by Moses *before* that idolatrous act took place; and that he was descending from the mount charged with that system, as well as with the tables of the law, when he discovered that the people were engaged in the worship of the golden image they had set up.

A survey of the ceremonial system of the law would be imperfect without some reference to the types which were included in those ceremonies. But on a subject of this nature, which is not exactly involved in the object of the present work, it becomes an advantage to be able to speak in the words and with the authority of others the sentiments we entertain.

The following is the view which Professor Jahn takes of the question—"Whether there are types in the Laws of Moses?":—

"That there are historical and moral types in the Laws of Moses is evident from the Passover, and from the Feast of Tabernacles,‡ also from the rite of circumcision, and the golden plate on the mitre of the high-priest, for a typical import is expressly assigned to these last by Moses himself.§ But whether there are to be found in the writings of Moses what

* Lev. xii. 4.

† By common food he means meat that had *not* been offered at the altar.

‡ Exod. xii. 1—13; Lev. xxiii. 4, 8; Deut. xvi. 1—8.

§ Consult Exod. xxviii. 38; and Deut. x. 16, xxx. 6.

are termed *prophetical* types has been a subject of very great controversy. We see in the discussions which have arisen upon this subject the tendency of men to rush from one extreme to another; and because types of this kind were formerly too much multiplied* the wisdom of men in later days has taken upon it boldly to deny the existence of any such types at all. One thing, however, appears to be certain, that the whole Mosaic discipline, taken in connection with the promises made to the patriarchs, was not only introduced to preserve and transmit the true religion, but implied and intimated something better to come. Those better times were not hidden from the sight of the prophets, and often, from age to age, they formed the subject of their predictions. But express and insulated types of Christ, or of the Christian church, *known to be such by the ancient Hebrews*, do not appear to be found in the Laws of Moses. Still it is a question worthy of further investigation than has hitherto been bestowed upon it, whether God, through the instrumentality of Moses, did not so far order certain events and ceremonies that they should be discovered to be typical *at the coming of Christ*, and in this way facilitate the conversion of the Jews to the Christian religion?"

To this we cannot but add the useful observations of Dr. Wait:†—

"If we advert to the internal structure of the Law, which was accommodated to the temporary circumstances of the Israelites, restricted as it was, from the nature of the times and the genius of the people, who were thus appointed the guardians of God's truth and oracles, it will appear most eminently adapted to the preservation of the more ancient promises and revelations, and in every way fitted to be the connecting medium between the patriarchal economy and the gospel. Its very deficiencies contained indications that the end of its institutions remained to be accomplished; its obscurities intimated that its object and intent would hereafter be plenarily disclosed. Its whole catalogue of ceremonies was so constructed that, surrounded as the Hebrews were by nations who veiled their esoteric faith in external symbols or hieroglyphical devices, it was impossible they should not have directed the inquirer, even at the time when they were confining him to the pure worship of the One Eternal God, to have sought in them a hidden and fuller signification; and if at any time observant of the depravity of the Canaanite, or inquisitive concerning the superstitions of the house of bondage, the Israelite might have been induced to compare his legislative code with the laws of other communities, he must have perceived that it had proceeded beyond the civilization of the rest of the world; and could not have failed to have remarked that it ranked above all others in a permanent distinction, that, bearing the impress of a divine revelation, it contained provisions for the future, and prefigured, in its whole body of services, a far more expansive, although distant, communication from God to man; and although these evidences were dispersed through the whole economy, they may nevertheless be said to have been more

* A few instances of this multiplication of types may illustrate this:—"The tabernacle, in general, where Jehovah condescended to reside, was a type of the body of the Messiah, in which, as in a tent, he tabernacled while on earth. The silver sockets which formed the foundation might remind them of those important doctrines on which all evangelical religion is founded; and by being made of the half-shekels which were exacted from every male in Israel, they were calculated to show the personal interest which *each* should take in religion and its worship. The outer-covering of goats' hair might point out the unattractive appearance of religion to men of the world; the beautiful under-covering might indicate its glory, as seen by the saints; the covering of rams' skins dyed red might remind them of the efficacy of Messiah's blood, as an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; while the covering of badger's skin which (the Jewish traditions say) was blue, might point to the heavens, that true tabernacle which God had pitched and not man." (Brown's 'Antiquities,' i. 317.) It is really a pity to see so much sound divinity misapplied.

According to Gill, the staves overlaid with gold, and inserted in golden rings to bear the ark, "figured the ministers of Christ, enriched with the gifts and graces of his spirit, and possessed of the truths of the Gospel, more precious than gold and silver; who bear the name of Christ, and carry his Gospel into the several parts of the earth." The same author is very ingenious upon the golden candlestick. The shaft, or trunk, and body of the candlestick may, he says, either be typical of Christ, "who is the principal and head of the church, and stands in the middle of it, or else the church universal, of which the particular ones are parts. Its *branches* may either signify the several members of churches, who are in Christ as branches; *or else* ministers of the gospel, who have their commission and gifts from him; *or else* particular churches, who are branches of the church universal. Its *bowls*, which were to hold oil for the lamps, may denote men of capacity in the churches, full of the gifts and graces of the spirit: and the *knops* and *flowers* were for decoration, and may signify the gifts of the spirit with which private members and believers are adorned, *or* the gifts of the spirit with which the ministers of the word are furnished, and appear beautiful, publishing the glad tidings of salvation by Christ." This very learned and laborious commentator illustrates in the same style every detail in the apparatus of the tabernacle and the dresses of the priests. The futility of all this is shown by the fact that hardly any two interpreters agree in their explanations, except as to some great leading points, in which, probably, all that was intended to be significantly typical are really found.

† Course of Sermons preached before the University of Cambridge in the year 1825. Lond. 1826.

especially comprised in the TYPES, which rendered the sacrifices, oblations, and expiations figurative of HIM in whom they were ordained to receive their completion in the fulness of time: and as they supplied the student of Moses with the requisites to identify the true Messiah at his appearance, and established an union between the two testaments, which then evinced both to be revealed by the same All-wise Being, so they doubtless compensated to the Israelites for the absence of those mysteries and secret rites which the Gentiles had engrafted on theology, and which even the divinely taught Hebrew appears, from his numerous defections and his endless propensity to idolatry, to have required."

II. GOVERNMENT.

As many features of the previous patriarchal government were retained in the new constitution which was organised among the Sinai mountains, a short survey of that form of government will suitably introduce the general subject.

PATRIARCHAL GOVERNMENT.—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, governed their respective families with unlimited paternal authority. The number of servants in these families was so great that the power of the patriarchs was by no means inconsiderable. This appears from the fact that the males capable of bearing arms among Abraham's house-born servants alone amounted to 318.* These patriarchs were, in fact, powerful chiefs, as the emirs of the nomades are at the present day. They were completely independent, and owed allegiance to no sovereign; they formed alliances with other princes, and even with kings; they maintained a body of armed servants, and repelled force by force. For their vassals they were the priests who appointed the festivals and presented offerings; the guardians who protected them from injustice; the chiefs who led them to war; the judges who banished the turbulent, and, when necessary, inflicted even capital punishment upon transgressors.† The twelve sons of Jacob, after the death of their father, ruled their own families with the same authority. But when the descendants had increased so as to form tribes, each tribe acknowledged a *chief* or *prince* as its ruler. This office was at first hereditary, and belonged to the eldest son of the founder of the tribe, but probably afterwards became elective. This division of nations into tribes was very general in ancient times, and is still retained by nomades, such as the Bedouins and the Tartars. As the numbers of each tribe increased, the less powerful families united themselves to their stronger relatives, and acknowledged them as their superiors. Hence there arose a division of the tribes into collections of families. Such a collection was called *a house of fathers*, *a clan*, or *a thousand*, not because each of these divisions contained a thousand persons, for it is evident that the number varied.‡ Before the departure from Egypt, the Israelites were under the immediate government of the rulers of these clans, who were denominated *heads of houses of fathers*, *heads of thousands*, &c., and were in rank subordinate to the *princes*. These two classes of rulers were comprehended under the general name of *elders* or *heads of tribes*.§ They were fathers rather than magistrates, governing according to the regulations established by custom, and the principles of sound reason and natural justice. They provided for the general good of the whole community, while the concerns of every individual family still continued under the control of its own father. In general, those cases only which concerned the fathers of families themselves came under the cognizance of the elders. This patriarchal form of government has been, in a great measure, preserved to this day among the nomades, particularly among the Bedouin Arabs. They call the heads of their tribes *emirs*, or princes, and the heads of clans sheikhs, or *elders*, under which last of these denominations the Hebrews included both these orders of rulers.

* Jahn calculates the number capable of bearing arms—that is, not too young or too old—as one to four, which would make the number of home-born male servants amount to 1,272. Doubling this to include the females, we obtain 2,544 as the number in this class only, exclusive of purchased slaves, the number of which is nowhere stated. Allowing a suitable proportion for these, Abraham's subjects must have amounted to several thousands; and hence an estimate may be formed of the number of herds to attend which so many servants were necessary.

† Gen. viii. 20, xiv. 14, 24, xv. 9, 10, xxi. 14, xxii. 13, xxxiv. 14, xxxviii. 24; Job i. 5.

‡ Judg. vi. 15; 1 Sam. x. 19, xxiii. 23; Num. xxvi. 5—50.

§ Num. i. 16, x. 4.

It had originally been the duty of the princes themselves to keep the genealogical registers. Subsequently they employed *scribes* for that purpose; and these, in process of time, acquired such great authority, that, under the name of *shoterim* (rendered *officers* in our public version), they possessed considerable authority and sustained an important part in the government.*

While the Hebrews were in Egypt, the sovereign of that country did not interfere with this form of internal government. On the contrary, they made it instrumental to their own purposes; for the Hebrew *shoterim* were employed, under the direction of Egyptian overseers, to apportion and press forward the burdens of the people. But as the Hebrews after their deliverance from Egypt were to become a settled and agricultural nation, and were besides set apart for especial and important purposes, it was necessary that they should be provided with new political institutions, suited to such a condition and destination. For this purpose, as we have seen, they were led to the Sinai mountains, where they entered into peculiar compact with God, upon which the whole constitution was unalterably settled

The fundamental law of the Mosaic institutions, or rather their primary object, has been so fully stated and illustrated at the commencement and in the progress of the preceding portion [Religion] that nothing further on the subject need be said in this place. To preserve the connection of ideas, it is only necessary to remind the reader that this primary object was to prevent the encroachments of idolatry from entirely driving from the earth the correct knowledge of the Creator and Ruler of heaven and earth, and of the relations in which the race of man stood to Him.

To the descendants of Abraham was committed the high trust of preserving this invaluable treasure in the world, and finally of imparting it to other nations. But that they might be put in a condition suitable to this peculiar destination, civil institutions were necessary, by which the knowledge and worship of the true God should be so intimately worked into the political structure of the nation that they must be imperishable, as long as that nation should remain a nation, and could only be annihilated by the annihilation of the political existence of the people. And this was the character of the institutions which the Hebrew people received from God while they lay encamped at the foot of Mount Sinai.

Thus the worship of the one only true God was made the fundamental law of the state, and to take away ground for one of the most dangerous inducements to idolatry, as exhibited in the belief that He was too remotely exalted to concern himself in the government of the world, but left his functions of providence and supervision to be administered by inferior " gods," the universality of his providence was not only constantly inculcated, but He condescended to make himself the national and tutelary Deity of the Hebrews. It was the notion of those remote ages that every nation must have its tutelary divinity; and it was probably in accommodation to this notion that God was pleased to propose himself in this character to the Hebrews, but without allowing them to forget that He was also the sole and universal Lord.

But as the condescending manner in which Jehovah was pleased to represent himself to the Hebrews, was deemed insufficient to ensure the perpetuity of the knowledge and worship of the true God among them, He also became their King, in the manner and form of which we have already spoken, so that every religious duty should become a matter of political obligation; and all the civil regulations, even the most minute, were so founded upon the relation which God had entered into with his people, and so interwoven with their religious duties, that the Hebrew could not separate his God and his King, and in every law was reminded equally of both. The nation, therefore, as long as it had a national existence, could not entirely lose the knowledge or discontinue the worship of the true God.

Thus it is seen that Moses did not, like all other legislators, employ religion to support his political institutions, but exactly reversed this order, by introducing a civil constitution which

* Exod. iii. 16, v. 10–21.

was designed as a means of establishing pure religion permanently upon the earth, and of preserving the knowledge and worship of the true God to the latest generations.

RELATIONS OF THE HEBREWS TO OTHER NATIONS.* Under this very peculiar constitution the Hebrews were to govern themselves in the midst of nations who could not understand religion as separate from idolatry, which they regarded as entirely conformable to right reason, and who regarded their greatness, power, and prosperity, as the gifts of their gods and the magical effects of their worship. Pagan superstition was made attractive and alluring to the senses not only by religious pomps and ceremonies, but by indecent imagery and lascivious songs, by idulgence in fornication and unnatural lusts, as part of the worship of their gods.

That the Hebrews might live uncontaminated among people so grossly superstitious and yet so highly celebrated, as some of them were, for their wisdom, it was necessary that they should avoid all intimate friendships, and, as much as possible, all intercourse with pagans. Formal prohibitions of such intercourse would be scarcely sufficient; and it would be most effectually prevented by the introduction of peculiar customs, which, while in themselves decorous and useful, differed from those of other nations. Such customs, once established, become a second nature; and as they must be relinquished by those who wish to mix with people by whom they are despised, they remained a double barrier against union with the heathen. The Hebrews were already accustomed to a similar state of things among the Egyptians; and among themselves some singular, if not peculiar rites, were already in existence, particularly that of circumcision. These peculiarities formed the basis on which the great wall of partition between them and other nations was built. Their ancient usages were more accurately defined by the Mosaic law, and new rites were added. Everything was strongly contrasted with the customs of pagans, or designed to keep the Hebrews in constant remembrance of Jehovah their king. Thus many details of the law which, without reference to circumstances, may appear arbitrary or trivial, tended to separate the people from the heathen and to guard them against idolatry; and in this view they were of essential importance to the end for which they were designed—the preservation of the knowledge of the true God.

This separation from paganism was indispensable to the accomplishment of the purposes which the Hebrews were designed to answer. But separation from other nations, not enmity to them, was that which the law required. Individuals were forbidden to form intimate friendship with the heathen; but whenever they had any necessary transactions with them, they were required to treat them affectionately as neighbours, and to fulfil in respect to them all the common duties of philanthropy. Precepts to this effect are of frequent occurrence in the Mosaic law.† The Hebrew government could also enter into alliance with other states when the public good required it. Moses indeed makes an exception in regard to a few nations; but the very exception is a tacit permission to form connection with others when necessary. These exceptions will come under our notice historically, when also we shall have occasion to trace the disastrous effects which resulted from the occasional neglect of the laws by which the intercourse and alliance with foreign nations were restricted.

HEBREW MAGISTRATES.—Having thus exhibited the foreign relations of the Hebrews, as regulated by the fundamental law of the state, we may now turn our attention to their domestic polity. This remained much as it had been under the patriarchal government, but re-organised in such a manner, that the people might recognise in every civil institution the sovereignty of JEHOVAH their king. The Hebrews were still divided into twelve tribes as before. The tribe of Levi was separated from the rest, and devoted to the service of the court and the state; but the tribe of Joseph, whose two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, were adopted

* Although this section is taken (in an abridged form) almost entirely from Jahn's 'Hebrew Commonwealth,' which, indeed, is our chief guide throughout the present division, the pages which Moses Lowman devotes to the same subject are well worth perusal. Indeed there is little, if any, difference between Lowman and Jahn, save that the latter takes broader views of his subjects, and illustrates them with greater knowledge.

† Exod. xxii. 10, xxiii. 9; Lev. xix. 24; Deut. x. 18, 19, xxiv. 17, xxvii. 19; compare Jer. xxii. 3; Zech. vii. 10.

by Jacob,* was subdivided into two, and received two portions in the allotment of the promised land; so that the number of the tribes remained the same.

The authority of the princes of the tribes and of the heads of families and unions was continued as before. The *shoterim* or genealogists were also preserved.† Yet Moses, by the advice of Jethro, his father-in-law, increased the number of judges in the manner which has been mentioned in the historical narrative (p. 208). The judges over the divisions of tens, fifties, hundreds, and thousands, were such as were recommended to Moses by the respect and confidence of the people, and were, for the most part, selected from the heads of families, genealogists, and other persons of consideration.‡ At the first institution there must have been about 60,000 judges of ten, 12,000 judges of fifties, 6000 judges of hundreds, and 600 judges of hundreds. This institution was willingly received by the Hebrews, as they had witnessed the regular administration of justice in Egypt, and had learned its advantages. It seems that the inferior judges, that is, those who superintended the judicial concerns of the smaller numbers, were subordinate to the superior judges, or those who judged a larger number; and, accordingly, cases of a difficult nature went up from the inferior to the superior judges; and those of a very difficult character, so as to be perplexing to the superior judges, were brought before Moses himself. After his death these were brought before the chief magistrate of the nation; or, if there were no such magistrate, the high-priest, who, as the first minister of the Invisible King, decided causes of this kind after consultation with the wisest and most learned of the priests.§ As this institution was designed to be perpetual, when any of the judges died or went out of office, their places were supplied by new elections. After the people were settled in Palestine, judges as well as genealogists were appointed for every city and surrounding district. Both offices were frequently, if not generally, held by the same person.‖ These judges sustained a civil as well as a judicial character, and are included in the lists of those who are denominated the elders and princes of Israel; that is to say, supposing they were chosen from the elders and princes, they did not forfeit their seat among them by taking the judicial office; on the contrary, the respectability attached to their office (supposing they were *not* chosen from them) entitled them to be reckoned in their number.¶

There were, therefore, in every tribe *judges*, *genealogists*, *heads of families*, *princes*. Each of these classes of magistrates had its peculiar duties. The *judges* administered justice. The *genealogists* kept the genealogical tables, in which they occasionally noted the most remarkable occurrences of their times. The historical notices which are contained in the first book of Chronicles, and which are not found in the books of Moses, were probably derived from these tables.** *The heads of families*, with *the prince of the tribe*, had charge of the general concerns of each tribe; and, although the judges and genealogists appear to have been subordinate to them, it must be regarded as an important measure which assigned to a class not *necessarily* connected with them the judicial functions which had formerly belonged to *their* station; for whether so intended by Moses, or so understood at first by them, no one can doubt that, by this separation of the character of judge from that of hereditary chieftain, crippled the aristocratic principle to that extent which was necessary to make it work well in the new constitution, and ensure the submission of the whole to the general government. It perhaps demonstrates the success of this operation that the princes of the tribes make but little figure in the general history, and that not one of them ever took a leading or principal part in the affairs of the whole nation.

In Palestine these magistrates were distributed into the several cities, and those who resided in the same city composed the legislative assembly of that city and its surrounding district. When the magistrates of all the cities belonging to any tribe were collected, they formed the supreme court, or legislative assembly, of the tribe. In like manner the magistrates of several different tribes might assemble in one body, and legislate conjointly for all the tribes which they represented. When the magistrates of all the tribes met together they formed the

* Gen. xlviii. 5.
† Num. xi. 16; Deut. xvi. 18, xx. 5, xxxi. 28.
‡ Exod. xviii. 13—26; Deut. i. 12—15; compare Exod. xviii. 21, 24.
§ Deut. xix. 17, xxi. 5.
‖ Deut. xvi. 18, xxxi. 28; 1 Chron. xxiii. 4, xxvi. 20; Deut. i. 15, 16.
¶ Deut. xxxi. 28; Josh. viii. 33, xxiii. 2, xxiv. 1.
** 1 Chron. iv. 21—23, 39—45, v. 10, 19—22, vii. 20—24.

general legislature of the whole nation.* There were no pecuniary emoluments attached to any of these offices, but they conferred great dignity and authority upon those who held them.

THE LEARNED CLASS.—The Hebrews had long acknowledged as magistrates the *princes of tribes*, *heads of houses*, and *genealogists*, and they admitted without difficulty the institution of judges, since their office was neither lucrative nor hereditary. Nor, at first, was any opposition made † when the tribe of Levi, which had greatly distinguished itself by its zeal for JEHOVAH, the Invisible King, was set apart to the service of the tabernacle, and the altar (that is, in a political view, to be the courtiers of the KING), and to all those offices of state in which learning was requisite, and thus to the cultivation of learning itself.‡ The *princes of tribes* and *heads of families*, however, still retained their ancient honours, and the members of other tribes were permitted to hold civil offices, and to apply themselves to the sciences. Thus, on the one hand, the advantages of this institution were secured, and the educated parent was able to instruct his son in the sciences, and to prepare him for public employment; while, on the other hand, its disadvantages were avoided, and learning did not, as in Egypt, become the mystery of the learned order, nor was civil government transformed into a domination of priests. Moses, certainly, can never be justly accused of introducing regulations which tended to keep the people in ignorance, for every individual of whatever tribe who had capacity, desire, and leisure to apply himself to study, was at full liberty to devote himself to letters, while more than a fiftieth part of the whole nation were expressly set apart to promote the progress of knowledge.

In order to answer the end for which they were destined, the Levites were, more than the other Hebrews, to study the book of the law,—to preserve and disseminate correct copies of it,—to perform the duties of judges and genealogists,—and, consequently, to be theologians, jurists, and historians.§ As the priests and Levites were to try the accuracy of weights and measures, of which there were several models preserved in the sanctuary, it was necessary that they should understand something of mathematics; and as they were to determine and announce the moveable feasts, new moons, years, and intercalary, they were obliged to know something of astronomy.‖ The priests were to instruct the people in religion and the law, and to solve such questions as might arise on these subjects.¶ The spirit of the institution made the Levites also instructors of the people. It was undoubtedly their duty to read the law every seventh year to the assembled people; and, under the arrangements of David, they sang psalms and cultivated music.** As the priests by their exhortations were to rouse the courage of the soldiers when about to engage in battle, they probably paid some attention to eloquence; and as they had to perform the duty of police physicians, it was necessary they should know something of the art of medicine.†† It was the duty of the high-priest, as head

* Deut. xxv. 1—8, xix. 12, xxii. 15, xxv. 7, 9; Judg. viii. 14; 1 Sam. xvi. 4; Judg. xx 1—14, xxi. 1—11.

† "It was the less to be expected that discontent should arise on this score, as the Hebrews had seen in Egypt a similar institution productive of great public benefit. The Egyptian priests were a separate caste, divided into three subordinate classes. They performed not only the religious rites, but the duties of all the civil offices for which learning was necessary. They, therefore, devoted themselves in a peculiar manner to the cultivation of the sciences. This *learned nobility*, so to speak, was strictly hereditary, and no one from another tribe could be received among its members. They studied natural philosophy, natural history, medicine, mathematics, particularly astronomy and geometry, history, civil polity, and jurisprudence. They were practising physicians, inspectors of weights and measures, surveyors of land, astronomical calculators, keepers of the archives, historians, receivers of the customs, judges and counsellors of the king, who himself belonged to their caste. In short, like Jethro the priest of Midian, and Melchizedek the priest and king of Salem, they formed, guided, and ruled the people by establishing civil regulations, performing sacred services, and imparting religious instruction. They were liberally rewarded for the discharge of these important duties; not only by possessing large estates in land, which, if we may credit Diodorus Siculus, occupied a third part of all Egypt, but also by receiving from the king a stated salary for their civil employment. However suspicious such an order may appear to many at the present day, it was admirably adapted to those times, and by means of it Egypt was raised far above all the nations of antiquity, both in regard to her civil institutions and her advancement in the sciences. Hence even the Greeks, in ancient times, were accustomed to borrow their politics and their learning from the Egyptians. If then an institution, in many respects so useful, could be adopted by the Hebrews in such a manner as to retain its advantages, and reject, as far as possible, its faults, it was evidently the wisest measure which that people could adopt."—JAHN.

‡ Exod. xxxii. 26—29.

§ Num. xvi. 2—7; 1 Chron. xxiii. 4, xxv. 29; 2 Chron. xix. 8, xxxiv. 13.

‖ Deut, x. 10, xxviii. 11; Lev. xxv. 8—12.

¶ Deut. xvii. 9; Mal. ii. 4—7.

** Deut. xxxi. 11, 12; 1 Chron. xxiii. 5; 2 Chron. xvii. 7—9.

†† Deut. xx. 2; Lev. xiii. xiv.

of the class, and minister of state to the King Jehovah, to superintend all other persons in office. When there was no chief magistrate of the community, he also, with the advice of the inferior priests, decided the most difficult legal controversies, and managed all the affairs of state. In important and doubtful cases, he, at the request of the principal rulers, or of the chief magistrate, consulted the Divine King himself, by urim and thummim.* But in all these employments, the priests and Levites, equally with the other Hebrews, were strictly prohibited the use of magic oracles, necromancy, astrology, omens, soothsaying from the entrails of animals or the movements of clouds, and all those artifices † which, among the Egyptians and other ancient nations, were the usual means of managing the populace. Thus the Hebrew priests were the only priests of antiquity who were not allowed to impose upon the credulity of the multitude.

The subject of the provision made for this important body has already passed under examination, and requires no further notice in this place. They had no real estates or definite salaries, like the Egyptian priests; but were, on the contrary, deprived of the real estate to which they were by birth entitled equally with the other tribes: and the compensatory provision which was made for them was, although ample, by no means exorbitant, nor more than sufficient to preserve them from the necessity of seeking a subsistence, through means and pursuits which would have left them without leisure for those acquirements which were necessary to the becoming discharge of the important functions entrusted to them.

Relation of the tribes to each other.—As each tribe was governed by its own rulers, and administered its own affairs, it constituted an entire civil community, independent of the other tribes.‡ If any affair concerned the whole or many of the tribes, it was determined by them in conjunction, in the legislative assembly of the nation.§ If any one tribe found itself unequal to the execution of any proposed plan, it might connect itself with another, or with any number of the other tribes.|| But although each of the twelve tribes was, in some respects, an independent state, and as such had its separate interests; still, they were all united by certain general interests, and formed but one nation. They were descended from one ancestor, of whom they inherited Divine promises, which had already been in part fulfilled. This common bond of union, which embraced all their tribes, was strengthened and drawn more closely, by the necessity of mutual aid against their common enemies. Jehovah was the God and King of the whole nation; and the sacred tabernacle, which was his temple and palace, was common to all the tribes. They had one common oracle, the urim and thummim; one common high-priest, the first minister of the king; a common learned class, who possessed cities in all the tribes; a common law of church and state. In short, the constitution was so contrived that notwithstanding the independence of all the tribes, each had a sort of superintendence over the rest, in regard to their observance of the law. Any of the tribes could be called to account by the others for the transgression of the law; and if they refused to give satisfaction they might be attacked and punished by war.¶

It is possible, as Michaelis remarks, that a political community thus constituted may exist without any proper sovereign power, to which the last appeal must be made. But there will probably be a want of promptness and energy in its movements. It may be quiet, prosperous, and happy, or fall into anarchy, confusion, and wretchedness, according to the conduct of the members. Many examples of these conditions of the Hebrew state will very soon come under our notice in the historical narrative. In such a community it was also to be expected that the more powerful tribes would be rivals and jealous of each other. Accordingly we find this rivalship existing between the tribe of Judah, to which belonged the right of *primogeniture* (forfeited by Reuben), and the tribe of Joseph, which had *the double portion.*** The right of possessing a double portion, in consequence of which the tribe of Joseph was divided

* Deut. xvii. 9—12; Exod. xxviii. 30; Num. xxvii. 21; 1 Sam. xxiii. 10—12, xxx. 6—8. † Deut. xviii. 9—14.
‡ Judg. xx. 11—46; 2 Sam. ii. 4; Judg. i. 21, 27—33.
§ Judg. xi. 1—11; 1 Chron. v. 10, 18,19; 2 Sam. iii. 17; 1 Kings xii. 1—24.
|| Judg. i. 1—3, 22, iv. 10, vii. 23, 24, viii. 2, 3.
¶ Josh. xxii. 9—34; Judg. xx. ** Gen. xlix. 8—10, xlviii. 5, 6.

into those of Ephraim and Manasseh, and which was equivalent in fact to the right of primogeniture, placed these two tribes on nearly the same footing, and caused them to look upon each other with the jealous and unfriendly eyes of competitors. From rivalship of this nature finally arose the sad schism by which the nation was sundered into two monarchies.*

Legislative Assemblies.—As all the twelve tribes had many interests in common, and formed in this respect but one political body, the magistrates of all the tribes met in general assemblies to consult for the general good of the nation.

These general assemblies were convened by the actual chief magistrate of the commonwealth for the time being, or, wanting him, by the high-priest.

The place of assembly was usually before the door of the tabernacle, the palace of the Invisible King,† or on some spot which had acquired a degree of sacredness from having been the scene of some great event.‡ As long as the Hebrews dwelt together in camps, these assemblies were summoned by the sound of the sacred trumpets; but after the settlement in Palestine heralds must have been employed for the purpose. These assemblies were of two kinds. The sound of *one* trumpet was the signal for convoking a select assembly composed of the princes of tribes and heads of families. But the blowing of two trumpets was the signal for calling the great assembly, which included the judges and genealogists, and (at least, on important occasions) as many of the people as chose to attend.§

These assemblies received different denominations according to the class of which they were composed. When the whole people were collected, they formed what was called *the whole assembly*, or *congregation*. There were also, *the princes of the assembly*, or *congregation; those called to the assembly; those deputed to the assembly*; and *the elders of the assembly*, or *senators*.‖

While Moses sustained the office of ruler among the Hebrews, he announced to these public assemblies the commands of God, which were afterwards communicated by the magistrates, and especially by the *shoterim* (whom, for the want of a better English term, we have called *genealogists*) to the people, each one to the families under his immediate direction. These assemblies exercised all the rights of sovereignty. They declared war, made peace, formed alliances, and chose generals, civil rulers, and ultimately kings. They prescribed to the rulers; they elected the principles on which they were to govern; they tendered to them the oath of office, and rendered them homage.¶

There is no evidence that the magistrates received any instructions from the people respecting the measures to be adopted in the legislative assemblies; nor does any instance occur in which the people exhibited any disposition to control or interfere with their deliberations. Still the assemblies were in the habit of proposing their decisions and resolutions for their ratification and consent.** When, however, Jehovah was chosen as the King of the Hebrew nation, it was not by the assembly, but by the whole body of the people, all of whom, as well as their rulers, took the oath of obedience, even the women and children.†† The people were attached to their magistrates, and generally accepted what they proposed, and rejected what they disapproved. But there were times when they raised their voices so loudly against their measures, that they were compelled to abandon them. Even in the times of the monarchy, the people refused the honours of a regal burial to those kings who had incurred their displeasure, and elevated to the throne the prince with whom they were most pleased, without regard to the order of succession.‡‡

Form of Government. When we recollect that God was expressly chosen the King of

* 1 Kings xii.

† Num. x. 2—4; Judg. xx. 1, 27, 28; Josh. xxiii. 1, 2; 1 Sam. x. 17.

‡ Josh. xxiv. 1; 1 Sam. xi. 14, 15; 1 Kings xii. 1.

§ Exod. xxxiv. 31, 32; Deut. xxix. 9—11; Judg. xx.

‖ Exod. xix. 7, xxiv. 3—8, xxxiv. 31, 32, xxxv. 1—4; Lev. iv. 13, viii. 3—5, ix. 5; Num. xi, 25, 30, xvi. 2.

¶ Exod. xix. 7, xxiv. 3—8; Josh. ix. 15—21; Judg. xx. 1, 11—14, 18, 28, xxi. 13 *et seq.*; 1 Sam. x. 24, xi. 14; 2 Sam. iii. 17 19, v. 1—3; 1 Kinrs xii.

** 1 Sam. xi. 14, 15; comp. Josh. viii. 33, xxiii. 2, *et seq.*, xxiv. 1, *et seq.*

†† Exod. xxiv. 3—8; Deut. xxix. 9-14.

‡‡ Num. xvi.; Josh. ix. 18, 19; 2 Chron. xxvi. 1, 2; 1 Kings xxi. 1—4, xxiii. 30; compare 2 Chron. xxiii. 25, xxxvi. 1.

the Hebrew nation, and that he enacted laws, and decided litigated points of importance;* when we also remember that he solved such questions as were proposed to him;† that he threatened punishments, and, in some instances, he actually inflicted them upon the hardened and impenitent;‡ and when, finally, we take into our consideration that He promised prophets, who were to be, as it were, his ambassadors,§ and afterwards sent them according to his promise; and that, in order to preserve the true religion, he governed the whole people by a striking and peculiar providence, we must acknowledge that God was the real Monarch of the nation, and that the government was a *theocracy*. This form of government was altogether suited to the character and necessities of those remote ages, when the political constitutions of all nations were so much connected with their particular gods, and with their national systems of religion, as to be, at least, in appearance, theocratical. But the theocracies of the pagans admit of no comparison with that of the Hebrews. Those were impostures; this was genuine. And we must always be mindful of the essential distinction that while, in the pagan theocracies, religion was employed merely as a means of perpetuating and strengthening the civil constitution; in that of the Hebrews, on the contrary, the preservation of religion was the end, and the civil constitution the means of attaining it.

There has been much inquiry into the nature of the government established by the law. But in so far as it was a theocracy,—in so far as God was the Ruler of the state—unquestionably the government was a despotism. In the very nature of things it could not be otherwise. God could not be less than an absolute king. It would have been a palpable mockery that infinite and unerring wisdom should submit its behests to the approval or control of weak and erring judgments.

But the supreme and absolute power of the King, as the necessary result of his infallibility and omnipotence, being conceded, it is still open to inquire what was the character of the internal and subordinate government as administered by the magistrates.

That the sovereignty of Jehovah over the Hebrews might be the more manifest, he appointed no viceroy; but he had a minister of state, if we may be allowed the expression, in the person. Nevertheless, it was neither expedient nor proper that the political affairs of the nation should all be directed by the immediate interposition of God; and it was necessary that their polity should partake, more or less, of the usual forms of human governments. Such affairs were, therefore, still, in a great degree, left under the direction of the elders, princes, etc. It appears to them that Moses delivered the commands he received from God, determined expressly their powers, and submitted their requests to the decision of Jehovah.‖ The government, as exercised by the princes and elders over their several tribes and families, was doubtless of a patriarchal kind, that is, paternally despotic. But this power was certainly limited by public opinion, as the same form of power is now, wherever it continues to exist. Whether the power of these persons, as exercised collectively in the legislative assemblies, was equal to or less than that which the individual members possessed in their respective tribes and clans, cannot be distinctly known. It is, however, with reference to the authority which they thus possessed that Josephus calls the government an *aristocracy*. But from the circumstance that the people possessed so much influence as to render it necessary that laws should be submitted to them for their ratification, and that they even proposed laws, or resisted those that were enacted; from the circumstance also that the legislature of the nation had no power of levying taxes, and that the civil code was regulated and enforced by God himself independently of the legislature, Lowman, Michaelis, and others, are in favour of considering the Hebrew government a *democracy*. In support of this opinion, such passages are adduced as those cited below.¶ The truth seems to lie between these opinions. The government exhibited, in fact, a combination of the monarchical, the aristocratical, and the democratical

* Num. xvii. 1. 11, xxvii. 1—11, xxxvi. 1—10.

† Num. xv. 32—41; Josh. vii. 16—22; Judg. i. 1, 2, xx. 18, 27, 28; 1 Sam. xiv. 37, xxiii. 9—12, xxx. 8; 2 Sam. ii. 1.

‡ Num. xi. 33—35, xii. 1—15, xvi. 1—50; Lev. xxvi. 3—46; Deut. xxvi. xxx.

§ Deut. xviii. 15—22.

‖ Num. xiv. 5, xvi. 4, *et seq.*, xxvii. 5, xxxvi. 5, 6.

¶ Exod. xix. 7, 8, xxiv. 3—8; compare Deut. xxix. 9—14; Josh. ix. 18, 19, xxiii. 1, *et seq.*, xxiv. 2, *et seq.*; 1 Sam. x. 24, xi. 14, 15; Num, xxvii. 1—8, xxxvi. 1—9.

forms. Yet it was not properly a *mixed* government, except as regarded the aristocratical and democratical principles: for while these two principles justly counterbalanced each other, there was this marked peculiarity, that *neither* acted upon or controlled the *monarchical* principles as exhibited in the sovereignty of JEHOVAH. A human monarchy would have been much limited by the joint operation of the aristocratical and democratical principles which existed in the Hebrew constitution. It also well deserves to be noticed that the manner in which the ordinary powers of the state were divided and administered by human hands, while it might seem to give a character of weakness to the general government (*apart* from the theocratical monarchy), did, in the same degree, tend to prevent any individual or body from acquiring such predominant influence as might endanger the liberties of the people and tend to subvert the established system of government.*

III. GENERAL LAW.

We have already stated that it is not our intention to take up this branch of the subject in any detail; the rather, as it will be in our power to incorporate the more essential characteristics in the historical narrative. We shall therefore confine ourselves to a few general remarks on some principal classes of such laws as have not already passed under our notice.

Locality of Judaism.—It is a singular and instructive fact that Christianity is the only religion suited to universal man. Or, in other words, no other religion originating in the east, was ever such as could be observed without alteration by the inhabitants of the north. They have all particular observances and requirements which are impracticable or difficult in climates very different from that in which they originated. It is from this cause probably that the direction which all false religions have taken in their spread has been the direction of latitude, not of longitude. Thus the religions of Zoroaster and Mohammed, by requiring daily ablutions and other similar ceremonials, rendered their religion intolerable to the people of cold countries. But what was narrowness of view in the heathen legislators, had a definite object in the law of Moses, in which there is much to confine the religious system which it established not only to a warm climate, but to the particular country of Palestine. The possession of a separate country, and of *that* country in particular, was essential to the system established by Moses. Hence the Hebrews could never sing the song of Jehovah in any strange land; and hence, since they have been a people without an altar or a priest, without a country or a state, their system has been altogether different to what the law intended. In fact, the system of Moses has been *extinct* ever since the seed of Abraham were driven from their inheritance, and was much modified even by their temporary expatriation of seventy years.

That it was the Divine intention to assign this limit to the religion, appears by the single fact that there was but one altar, to which all the adult males of the nation were to repair three times every year. The frequent ablutions required by the law, however necessary and even agreeable in the warm climate of Syria, would, as already remarked, not have been prescribed in a religion intended to extend over the ice-bound soil of Iceland or Norway. The same

* What Lowman says on this point will be found to deserve attention. In reference, generally, to the survey we have now taken of the Hebrew government, we must apprise the reader that the chief part of whatever praise it claims must be ascribed to Jahn. The view which he takes may, indeed, be found to be, in the main, little other than a very able digest and exposition of the materials offered by Lowman and Michaelis. But this digest is given in a form so exceedingly compact and comprehensive, that it is difficult to find any point on which he has not touched, or to obtain any information which he has not supplied. Hence after diligently examining many other authorities, it seemed the most satisfactory course to adopt his statements, in a form somewhat curtailed and modified, and with such additions as seemed likely to be of use.

Jahn's 'Biblische Archæologie' is in German, as its title imports. It is in five octavo volumes, two of which are occupied by the political and historical portion. An *abridgment* of the whole was published by the author under the title of 'Archæologia Biblica,' which has been translated into English by T. C. Upham. This work contains an abridgment of the political but not the historical portions of the third and fourth volumes. But this portion of the work has been translated and published as a separate work by Calvin Stowe, under the title of 'The History of the Hebrew Commonwealth.' Other works which we have had before us, and have more or less consulted, will be named at the end of the chapter, for the benefit of such of our readers as may wish to pursue such inquiries more largely.

observation results from the character of the animal and vegetable products required for the service of the altar; for, although most of them are common to many other countries, there are many countries in which they are not naturally found.* Instances might be accumulated to show that the law was intended as well for a particular country as for a particular purpose, for a particular duration of time and for a peculiar people.

Agriculture.—It was one important object of the law to wean the Israelites from the habits of *nomade* shepherds, and to make them settle down as an agricultural people, without more than a proportionate attention to flocks and herds. This was effected by making agriculture the basis of the state; and by introducing many laws only applicable to an agricultural people, and which only an agricultural people could observe. Every citizen was allotted a certain quantity of land, and had the right of tilling it, and of transmitting it to his heirs. He had no power to alienate it for any longer period than till the next jubilee year; and even when thus disposed of, the vender, or his nearest relative, had the right to redeem the land whenever they chose, by paying the estimated amount of the profits to the year of jubilee. By these laws the rich were prevented from coming into possession of large tracts of land, and then leasing them out in small parcels to the poor, as is usual in many countries. For the land thus granted to them, a low produce rent, under the name of tithes, was to be paid to the Divine King, in the manner which we have already noticed. Hence all, who were not set apart for religious services, were regarded by the law as agriculturists, whether they resided in villages or in cities. And such they were in fact; for although persons of wealth and consideration did not, in the cultivation of the soil, put themselves on the same level with their servants, yet none of them disdained to put their hand to the plough.† Some of these regulations encouraged that attention to agriculture which others made necessary; while the prohibition of one Hebrew from taking interest on money from another, together with the strict injunctions which restricted their dealings and commerce with foreigners, deprived them of so many advantages in commerce as, in a measure, obliged them to seek their subsistence from the product of the earth. It was not until the basis of the Mosaical constitution had been undermined, after the captivity, that the Jews took to merchandise and mechanic crafts, and in the same degree agriculture fell into disesteem among them. It is easy to see that it was only by means of agriculture that the nation could be kept compact and apart in Palestine, which was one great object of the law.

Distinctions of food.—The code of Moses is remarkable, above all others of early date, for the attention which it pays to the preservation of the public health. This has been already noticed with respect to the regulations concerning leprosy. The same appears in many other matters, and may be particularly instanced with respect to the distinctions of food as "clean" or "unclean," that is, "fit" or "unfit" to be the food of man. But while the exclusive use of wholesome kinds of food was secured to the people by the law, which declared all which was in any degree unwholesome to be ceremonially *unclean*; the distinction also operated powerfully in one of the great leading objects of the Mosaical institutions, that of keeping them apart as a peculiar people. In fact, as Tappan well observes,—"This statute, above all others, established not only a political and sacred, but a physical separation of the Jews from other people. It made it next to impossible for the one to mix with the other, either in meals or in marriage, or in any familiar connection. Their opposite customs in the article of diet not only precluded a friendly and comfortable intimacy, but generated mutual contempt and abhorrence. The Jews religiously abhorred the society, manners, and institutions of the Gentiles, because they viewed their own abstinence from forbidden meats, as a token of peculiar sanctity, and, of course, regarded other nations who wanted this sanctity as vile and detestable. They considered themselves as secluded by God himself from the profane world

* Wine and olive-oil are the most restricted vegetable products. We suspect, but do not feel assured, that the command to burn the fat of the sheep upon the altar, restricts the offerings to that limited species distinguished as 'fat-tailed.'

† 1 Sam. xi. 7; 1 Kings xix. 19; compare 2 Chron. xxvi. 10.

by a peculiar worship, government, law, mode of living, and country. Though this separation from other people, on which the law respecting food was founded, created in the Jews a criminal pride and hatred of the Gentiles; yet it forcibly operated as a preservative from idolatry by precluding all familiarity with idolatrous nations."

The separation thus effected is distinctly avowed as a principal reason for this remarkable portion of the Mosaical law.* But at the same time there is no indistinct reference to some inherent unsuitableness in the articles of food, to which the prohibition extends.

These were as follow:—

1. Quadrupeds which do not ruminate, or which have not feet completely cloven. This excluded all solid-footed animals, such as the *horse*, and all the many-toed animals, which denomination embraces all beasts of prey. Animals which do not ruminate, although they are *bifid*, such as the swine, are forbidden; as also those which, though they do ruminate, do not *completely* divide the hoof, as the *camel;* or which, although they ruminate, are not *bifid*, but *many-toed*, as the hare and the rabbit.

2. The fat and other heavy and innutritive parts of even clean animals are forbidden. They were set apart, as being consecrated to God, and were the parts usually consumed on the altar; a religious sanction being thus given to the inhibition.

3. Blood was also forbidden, and on the same grounds, as being consecrated to God; for which reason none but animals regularly slaughtered, so as to discharge the blood from the body, could be eaten.

4. Serpents, and creeping vermin, also certain insects which sometimes fly and sometimes walk or creep upon their feet. An exception is, however, made in favour of locusts and other insects, which, besides four walking legs, have two larger springing legs (*pedes saltatorii*).

5. With respect to *birds*, no particular characters are given for dividing them into classes, as "clean" or "unclean;" but judging from those that are specified, as far as the obsolete nature of the Hebrew names will admit, it will be found that birds of prey generally are rejected, whether they prey on lesser fowls or on animals, or on fish; while those which eat vegetables are admitted as lawful. So that the same principle is observed, in a certain degree, as in distinguishing quadrupeds.

6. All *fish* not having both fins and scales are declared unclean.

Now, in a warm climate, the heat, relaxing the fibres of the stomach, renders digestion more slow and difficult than in our colder climes, and therefore renders unwholesome and indigestible to Orientals many articles of diet in which we find nothing disagreeable. A practical illustration of this may be found in the difference in our own appetites and digestive powers in winter and in summer. It is not therefore necessary to contend that the prohibited food was in itself, and in all climes, injurious or improper, but that it was so in the particular clime and country which the Hebrews were destined to inhabit; or, at least, that there it was less suited for use than the sorts of food which were declared to be "clean." In this, as in other instances, the law was suited to a particular country, and was never intended for general use or application, as some have vainly supposed. It is, indeed, certain that the use of the kinds of food which the law prohibits is very apt, in warm climates, to produce various kinds of scorbutic and scrofulous disorders—to which disorders the Hebrews appear, by the way, to have been extremely liable. It is also certain that, generally speaking, *ruminating* animals concoct their food better than others which swallow it with little mastication, and therefore their flesh contains more of the nutritious juices and is more easy of digestion, and, consequently, of assimilation to the solids and fluids of the body, and on this account they are particularly wholesome and fit for food. The animals which do not ruminate concoct their food less perfectly; whence they abound in gross animal juices, which yield a comparatively unwholesome nutriment to man. Hence it has happened, in fact, that the chief supply of

* "Ye shall therefore [it is Jehovah who speaks] put difference between clean beasts and unclean, and between unclean fowls and clean: and *ye shall not make your souls abominable by beast, or by fowl, or by any manner of living thing that creepeth on the ground, which I have separated from you as unclean.* And ye shall be holy unto me: for I, JEHOVAH, am holy, *and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine.*" Lev. xx. 25, 26.

animal food is in most countries derived from animals which ruminate, but not so exclusively as among the Hebrews.

It is well known to all physiologists that the nutritive matter of animal food is contained chiefly in the muscular fibre; and it will be seen that the law restricted the Hebrews, as much as possible, to these parts, by consecrating, and thereby prohibiting the use of the fattest parts, as well as the blood and the liver*—or, at least, one lobe of the liver,—all of which the physicians of our own day would be glad to exclude from the dietary of any nation.

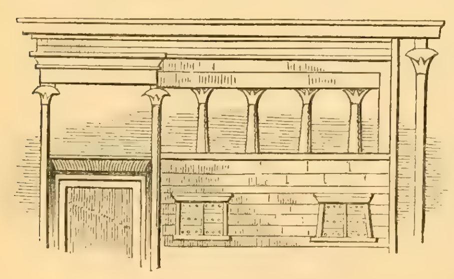
The unwholesomeness of *blood* in any form, taken as food, no one, that we know of, has ever called in question; and that this was a reason for the very urgent prohibition of its use we may be well assured, without denying that other reasons of a moral or typical nature may also be found. Blood affords a very gross nutriment, and is exceedingly difficult of digestion, and in some cases it is actually dangerous to *drink* it, for if taken warm, and in a considerable quantity, it may prove fatal. Blood being also highly alkalescent, particularly in warm climates, is subject to speedy putrefaction, and consequently that flesh will be the most wholesome, and best answer the purposes of life and health, from which the blood has been the most completely drained, and it will remain the longest suitable for food. Hence we see a sufficient reason for the extreme care of the law that no allowed animal should be used for food unless it were so slaughtered as completely to exhaust its blood. The many barbarous or superstitious customs of ancient times connected with the drinking of blood, and the eating of raw or even *living* flesh, which were prevented by this law, deserve also to be remembered, although they cannot be particularly specified in this place.

With respect to the distinction of *fish*, it is only necessary to observe that those which are without scales, such as the conger, eel, and others, abound in gross juices and in fat which few stomachs are able to digest with ease.

Larcher † remarks that the flesh of the eel, and of some other fish, thickened the blood, and, by checking the perspiration, tended to produce the diseases connected with leprosy; and he thinks that it was for this reason the Egyptian priests forbade such fish to be eaten, and, to render their prohibition effectual, caused them to be accounted sacred.

From what has been said the conclusions of Lowman may very properly be stated as the result:—"The food allowed the Hebrew nation, as a holy people, were the gentler sort of creatures, and of most common use, such as were bred about their houses and in their fields, and were, in a sort, domestic. They were creatures of the cleanest feeding, and which gave the most wholesome nourishment, and were of a better taste, and might be had in greater plenty and perfection by a proper care of their breeding and feeding: they seem, therefore, naturally fit to be chosen as a better kind of food."

The Smaller Laws.—We have often thought that the vital spirit of any system of law may often be better discovered in its smaller details than from its "weightier matters." Tried by this rule the law of Moses recommends itself by the humane spirit of its smaller injunctions. There are many such, and some of them so very minute as to have occasioned some cavil from light and careless thinkers. Josephus says,—"The laws (of Moses) neglect not small matters, but provide that even these shall be managed in a becoming manner."‡ Ordinarily exercised on high political objects, the law yet stoops to the smallest matters which bear on the public decency, tranquillity, and safety. There is a law which directs that, to prevent accidents, there should be a



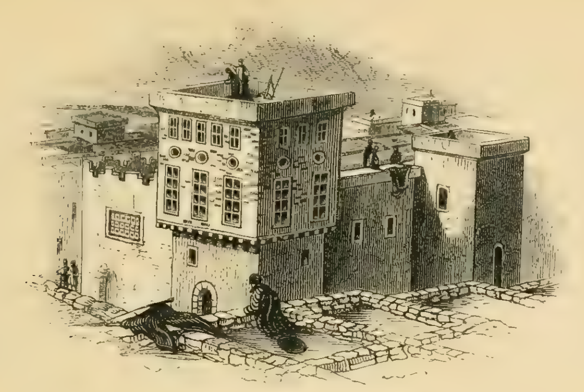
[House-top.—Ancient Egyptian.]

* The Bedouins have a singular appetite for eating the liver raw and warm of any sheep they kill, before they begin to dress the flesh. May not the consecration of the liver be expressly levelled at such a custom among the Hebrews?

† In Herodotus, Euterpe, lxxi.

‡ Antiq. iv. 8, 20.

parapet or battlement to their flat-roofed houses.* That such an injunction was needful, may intimate that terraced roofs were at that time less common in Syria than they were in Egypt.



[House-tops.—Modern Egyptian.]

This was the more essential, as it has always been the custom in Syria for people to sleep on the tops of their houses during summer, and to resort to them on other occasions. The law prohibiting the removal of stones set up to mark the boundaries of estates † is interesting, as illustrating a usage which existed also in Egypt. Much feeling and tenderness afflicted towards men, and even animals, is indicated in such injunctions as that which forbid any one to lay a stumbling-block in the way of the blind, or to speak reproachfully of the deaf;‡ or that which promises a blessing to him who, when he takes a nest of birds or eggs, leaves the parent bird unmolested;§ or that which forbids two such unequal animals as the ox and the ass from being yoked together in labour.‖

Ancient Customs.—There were usages of earlier times, so deeply rooted among the people, that it was not deemed prudent to attempt to abolish them altogether. But they were subjected to certain rules, which made them more than they had been conformable to humanity and justice. Moses did not abolish slavery; but he subjected it to some strong restrictions. Slavery had been perpetual; Moses gave it a term: masters had before the power of life and death; but Moses decreed liberty to the slave whom his master wounded; and a master was declared a homicide if his slave expired under his blows. The equally mild laws of Egypt on this head probably prepared the minds of the Israelites for the reception of this law. A similar power of life and death had been possessed by fathers over their children; and, although in their hands such power might more safely be left than in those of the master of a slave, it was still liable to abuse, and therefore the authority of the public tribunals was brought in, to modify or suspend its operation.

There was another old custom, too deeply rooted to be abolished, but which Moses took excellent measures to divest of some of its abuses. This was the custom of blood-revenge.

The execution of the punishment which in Gen. ix. 6 was decreed against homicide devolved upon the brother, or other nearest relative of the person whose life had been taken away. In case he did not slay the guilty person he was accounted *infamous*. Hence the application of the Hebrew word גואל, *goel*, that is, *spotted*, or *contaminated*, which he bore till the murder was avenged. A law of this kind—namely, which authorises the *blood avenger*, may, indeed, be necessary where there is no legally constituted tribunal of justice; but where this is established such a law ought to cease. Moses, however, knew what other legislators have since proved by experience,¶ that in this practice any serious alteration would scarcely be tolerated

* Deut. xxii. 8. † Deut. xix. 14, xxii. 17. ‡ Lev. xix. 14. § Deut. xxii. 6, 7.
‖ Deut. xxii. 10.
¶ The measures taken by the Wahabee chiefs to this end bear very instructively on the subject. "There was nothing which the Wahabee chiefs had more at heart than the abolition of the system of *blood-revenge*, at once the cruellest, most unjust, and

by the people. He therefore took the measures which seemed best under all the circumstances, and which were these :—

He appointed cities of refuge, three beyond, and three on this side Jordan. He took care, also, that the roads leading to them in straight lines should be laid out in every direction; and these were to be distinguished from other streets. Any one who had slain a person unintentionally, any person who had slain another, in consequence of his unjustly attempting his life, or had slain a thief before the rising of the sun, fled by one of these roads to the cities which have been mentioned. He was not to quit the city from which he had fled until the death of the high-priest; *after which the right of revenge could not be legally exercised.* This last quiet stipulation is admirable, in its tendency to put a stop to the interminable blood feuds which produce such disastrous effects among the Bedouin and other nations of Western Asia.

All persons who had been the cause of another's death might flee into one of these cities, which were the property of the priests and Levites ;* but they were all examined, and if found, according to the laws, guilty of homicide, were delivered up to the *avenger of blood.* For the law of retaliation was most strictly inflicted on those who were known to have been guilty of intentional murder; even the altar itself afforded no refuge, and no commutation whatever was admissible.†

The institutions of Moses offer many interesting traits with reference to marriage and domestic life; but they will best be described by the influence they exert, and the effects they are seen to produce in the historical narrative.

Humanity of the Law.—It is difficult to see how the character of a harsh legislator came to be ascribed to Moses by many writers, who seem to speak of him as one whose heart indulgence and compassion never reached. We have already produced instances to the contrary; and other examples of most humane consideration may be produced, none like which, we are confident, can be found in any other ancient code. Who but Moses protects the covering of the poor man and the implement of his labour from the exactor?—assures him the prompt payment of his daily wages?—and lessens his wants, and, consequently, his crimes, by securing to him many happy and abundant days, from his right to participate in the offering-feasts and other festivals of his wealthier brethren?‡ There was also *the tithe of the poor;* and it may be said that there is no ancient legislator, who made the goods of the rich liable to so many contributions for the benefit of the poor and destitute—if any one could, in the proper sense of the word, be destitute in Israel. The laws which directed that trees should not be *beaten* (to make *all* the fruit fall) by the owners, that the corners of fields should not be reaped, that dropped ears of corn should not be gathered, and that the forgotten sheaf should not be returned for—but that all should be left to the poor, are particularly striking precepts for an agricultural community.§

most vindictive principle ever adopted for retributive justice. In this amiable intention *they were never completely able to succeed.* They frequently went so far as to compel the relations of the deceased to accept the fines offered by the homicidal party; *but if the other party had taken its revenge before orders could be issued to the contrary, they who took this revenge were never called to any account for it.* To do this was beyond the power of the Wahabee, even when that power was at its greatest heighth; *for an act of this sort would have burst asunder every bond of society throughout Arabia.*"—Sir Harford Jones Brydges, ii. 115, 116. With respect to "the price of blood," mentioned in the above extract, it may be observed that it was fixed by Abu-bekr, the successor of Mohammed, at 100 she-camels. Saoud, the Wahabee chief, rated each camel at eight dollars, so that the price of blood among the Wahabees became 800 Spanish dollars.

* The cities alternately appointed as "cities of refuge" were, on the west of the Jordan, Kedesh in Galilee, tribe of Naphtali, —Shechem, in the tribe of Ephraim,—and Hebron in Judah: while those on the eastern side of the river were,—Bezer, upon the wilderness border of Reuben,—Ramoth in Gilead, tribe of Gad,—and Golan in Bashan, belonging to the tribe of Manasseh. All these were at suitable distances from one another. See Josh. xx. 7—9.

† Num. xxxv. 9—35; Deut. iv. 41—43, xix. 1—13; Exod. xxi. 12; 1 Kings ii. 28—34.

‡ Deut. xv. 9, xxiv. 6, 12, 17; Exod. xxii. 25—27; Lev. xix. 1. We learn from the Mishna (iii. 56), that marriages very generally were celebrated on the eve of the sabbath, that, from the abundance provided, the neighbouring poor might have wherewithal to spend their sacred day of rest in comfort and plenty.

§ Since, however, as might be expected, much stress has been laid upon the Mosaical processes on the subject of the poor, as if they were of eternal obligation, it may be well to note that these their privileges formed the whole provisions for the poor, and were not in addition to, but in the place of, such a fixed obligation as the community incurs in our own country to defray whatever expenses may be necessary to provide for the destitute poor. The sort of provision which Moses made for the Hebrew poor was very practicable and convenient in an agricultural community, and in one so peculiarly organised as that of the Hebrews: but their operation would not be practicable, or convenient if practicable, in any other. Besides, a large part of this provision arose from, and was connected with, the ceremonial law, which is no longer observed even by the Jews. Thus the application of

If Moses was often terrible as a prophet—as one standing between God and the house of [srael—he was altogether humane as a legislator. We may trace this double character in the greater part of the criminal laws. We shall there see that the crimes which are visited with nexorable severity, are crimes against God—crimes of idolatrous alienation, impunity for which would have been contrary to the very first principles of the system, and to the very easons for which that system was established. Such crimes might be more easily passed ver under the empire of an universal Deity, than under the government of a national God, resent among the people as their King. This memorable distinction being admitted, many cts became highly penal, which need not be so, and never were so under any other system.

But if from crimes of a religious nature we pass to those of an ordinary character, the criinal code of Moses offers no such severity. On the contrary, modern legislation would rather e disposed to censure the mildness of a code of criminal law which decrees certain victims nd oblations, and a small pecuniary fine, to be a sufficient expiation for crimes which other ations visit with afflictive punishments.* While even actual theft, which in eastern nations as generally been punished by cutting off the hand, the law only punishes by requiring ie culprit to restore double the amount which he had taken. And even sheep-stealing, hich until lately was regarded by our own law as a capital crime, was punishable by the w of Moses only by a fourfold restitution.† If there be apparent exceptions, it will be ound that they admit of easy explanation. For example, the law which for no crime— r an unintentional homicide cannot be regarded as a crime—confines a man to a partiular place, for perhaps many years, (till the death of the high-priest) seems harsh at the rst view. But in point of fact it was not intended as a punishment, nor was such in ality, further than that it obliged him to reside in a particular city; and this only to protect im from private vengeance, from which he was in this city safe, but to the operations of hich he was in all other places liable. The city was a city of *refuge* to him, not a city of *unishment*. He might leave it at any time if he had reason to think he had nothing to fear om the avenger, or if he were willing to take the consequences of leaving the protection which e law afforded to him.

Whoever carefully examines the criminal laws of Moses, will find that the laws of usage corporated in the code in forms more or less modified, are such as belonged to the Hebrews their former state as a pastoral people; and are such as we still find among the Bedouins Arabia. Some other laws, not referable to this source, can be traced to the Egyptian code, hile many others appear to have been peculiar to the Mosaical code, and were obviously ited to the peculiar circumstances and destiny of the chosen race.

The Law of Retaliation was common among almost all ancient nations, and in truth offered, a rude state of society, the most effectual means of protecting individuals from injury. evertheless, we are apt to be somewhat shocked at the broadness with which this doctrine is ated in the law, which enjoins, not only that life should be given for life, but "eye for eye, oth for tooth, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe, hand for hand, foot r foot."‡ And no doubt this was literally done in the earlier times. But as no instance of the ysical retaliation in all the Bible, except of life for life, and as, still more, there is an entire sence of all such poetical or prophetical allusion to the practice, as would surely have curred if it had existed—we may be tolerably certain that, as the Jewish writers allege, this w existed in the same form in which we now see it among the Bedouins, with whom, while e law itself is expressed with the same literal force as in the Mosaical law, the practice om the most remote antiquity has been, to assign a particular *price* to every kind of personal jury or mutilation—even down to a blow, which price, after conviction, is paid by the fending party, as the *ransom* of his *eye*, *hand*, &c., from the physical retaliation which the tter of the law authorises, but which never, in fact, takes place. This practice is, indeed,

Mosaical precepts would be wholly inadequate to meet the wants of the poor in such a country as ours. It is right to add t the Hebrew had the right to choose the objects of his bounty, and to apportion it as he pleased. Even gleaning, which had st the appearance of a public *right*, could not be exercised without the previous permission of the owner of the fields.

* Lev. vi. 2—6; Num. v. 5, 10. † Exod. xxii. 1, 3, 6, 8. ‡ Exod. xxi. 23—25.

recognised in the law, and the price is technically called *a ransom.** The amount of the fine was in most cases fixed by the injured party, or, rather, was such as the offender could induce him to take. All fines or indemnification went to the injured party, never to the state.†

None of the capital punishments of the law are cruel, as attended with protracted pains. There were other forms of death in the end; but the most common, and the only ones sanctioned by the law, were *stoning* and *slaying with the sword*. This last has been interpreted to mean beheading—a punishment known to the Egyptians,‡ but not necessarily implied in the Hebrew expression, which appears to have left it to the discretion of the executioner to use his weapon as he saw fit, and which, it seems, he generally did use, by running the criminal through with his sword.§ Some traces of decapitation may, however, be found in the texts cited below.||

Torture, imprisonment, and banishment, are not known to the law. Imprisonment was not known as a punishment, and it was not otherwise necessary, as trial followed apprehension, and execution followed trial, without delay. Banishment from the land of Israel would have been contrary to the very spirit of the Mosaical law, as it would have sent a son of Abraham into a region of idolaters, and have exposed him to behold the honour rendered to false gods, into whose worship he might himself be gradually drawn.

The only secondary punishments were fines, excommunications of various kinds, and the one corporal punishment of scourging. This last punishment was anciently, and is still, common all over the East. It neither was among the Hebrews, nor is now, anywhere in the East, considered more ignominious than we consider imprisonment, if as much so; and hence it was, and is, inflicted without distinction, on the highest, as well as the lowest persons in the state. Moses, however, in the usual humane spirit of his legislation, decreed that the number of stripes should in no case exceed forty.¶

We shall conclude these remarks, which have borne chiefly on the *spirit* of the Mosaical law, with some observations ** on a subject which many writers have rather overlooked: namely,—

The Moral tendencies of the law.—Knowing that Moses introduced his laws and ritual by the promulgation of the book of Genesis, which abounds with inculcations of morality, we are led to conclude that the Mosaic religion must, in all its parts, have had a moral, as well as a religious tendency.

The considerations and relations in which God presented himself to the Hebrews as entitled to their *love*, their gratitude, and their obedience, are eminently moral in their nature, but have already been too largely expressed to be in this place repeated.

The Hebrews were admonished by the law, not only to abstain from such kinds of food as were reckoned unclean, but also to keep themselves free from moral defilements, and to be pure and holy, even as God is holy.††

They were taught to love their neighbour as themselves,‡‡ not only the Hebrew, but the stranger also.§§ Hatred and revenge are prohibited.|||| Cruelty and inhumanity to servants are guarded against;¶¶—kindness to the poor, to widows, and to orphans, is inculcated.*** As an incitement to deeds of kindness of this nature, the people are reminded that they them-

* פדיון and כפר.

† Exod. xxi. 30.

‡ This is, perhaps, shown by Gen. xl. 17—19; but with more certainty on the Egyptian monuments, where persons are represented kneeling and bent forward, with their hands tied behind them, while their heads are smote off.

§ 1 Sam. xxii. 18; 2 Sam. i. 15; 1 Kings ii. 25, 29, 31, 34.

|| 2 Sam. iv. 8, xx. 21, 22; 2 Kings, x. 6–8.

¶ Lev. xix. 20; Deut. xxii. 18, xxv. 2, 3.

** Copied, with some slight alteration, from Jahn. Some of the instances have already been adduced for other purposes, but will well bear to be repeated here.

†† Lev. xi. 45, xix. 2, xx. 7, 8, 26; Deut. xiv. 1, 2, 21.

‡‡ Lev. xix. 18.

§§ Exod. xxii. 21, xxiii. 9, 12; Lev. xix 33, 34; Num. xv. 14; Deut. x. 18, 19, xxiv. 17, xxvii. 19.

|||| Exod. xxiii. 4, 5; Lev. xix. 16—18; Deut. xxiii. 7, 8; compare Job xxxi. 29—31.

¶¶ Exod. xx. 10, 11, xxi. 2—11, 20—26; Lev. xxv. 39—53; Deut. v. 14, 15, xii. 18, xv. 12—15, xvi. 11—14, xxiii. 15, 16; comp. Job xxxi. 13, 15.

*** Exod. xxii. 25, 26; Lev. xix. 9—13, xxiii. 22, xxv. 5, 6; Deut. xii. 5—7, xiv. 22—24, xv. 7—15, xvi. 10—12, xxvi. 11—15, xxvii. 19.

selves were, of old, strangers and servants to the Egyptians—an exhortation, which implies the knowledge and admission of the duty of doing to others what they wished done to themselves, and of not inflicting on others what they were themselves unwilling to suffer. It may be remarked, furthermore, that the Israelites were forbidden to exercise cruelty to their animals.*

They are forbidden to utter falsehoods;† and are admonished not to go up and down as talebearers among the people; but rather to do their duty, by informing the guilty persons of their faults in private, and not render themselves partakers of their guilt, by giving an unnecessary publicity to their faults.‡

They are commanded not to curse the rulers of the people, nor the magistrates, because their decisions may have been unfavourable to them.§

They are enjoined to avoid all fraud, as an abomination in the sight of God.‖ When they found any property, they were carefully to inquire for the owner, and restore it.¶ They were to keep themselves guiltless, not only from fornication and adultery, incest and bestiality, but of all impure concupiscence, which were declared to be great crimes in the sight of Jehovah.**

The obedience which was due to the civil laws, was urged on the ground that they originated from a merciful and holy Being, the Creator and Governor of all things.†† Moses, accordingly, in reference to this subject, namely, obedience to the civil laws, never fails to remind the people of their divine origin, and teaches them that unless those laws are observed as *religious* as well as civil institutions, it will be of no avail. Consult particularly the passages referred to below, and which are well worthy of repeated perusal.‡‡

Numerous sacrifices were insisted on, not indeed for any supposed worthiness in the sacrifices themselves, but because they were an indication of a grateful mind; because they presented a symbolic representation of the punishment due to transgressors, and uttered, as it were, an impressive admonition, that all sins were to be avoided. Sacrifices and mere ceremonial observances, were not, in themselves, considered as meritorious. On the contrary, it is expressly said, that God does not have respect to gifts and offerings, and that vows are not necessary.§§ A person who had made a vow could free himself from the performance of it by paying a certain amount, to be estimated by the priest; and, furthermore, the power was lodged in the master of a family of making void the vows of his wives and daughters.‖‖

Promises of *temporal* good and threats of *temporal* evil were necessary in an age in which the knowledge of a future life was limited and obscure. But they are no more obstacles to moral discipline and instruction than threats and promises are, at the present day, to the moral instruction of our offspring. Moreover, the threats and promises of which we speak, may be considered as addressed to the Hebrews as a people rather than as individuals; thus making a part of the civil polity: indeed, they may be considered as an evidence that God approves what is moral and condemns what is immoral and corrupt; and it is in this way that He governs the universe.

The religion of Moses, therefore, had an excellent moral tendency; it disciplined many men whose characters, for their moral elevation and worth, are fit subjects of admiration. If it had defects, let us have the candour to acknowledge that they are to be attributed, in a great measure, to the circumstances of the times, and the gratitude to confess that its deficiencies have been amply supplied by the gospel of Jesus Christ.

* Exod. x. 10, 11, xxiii. 11, 12, xxxiv. 26; Lev. xxii. 28, xxv. 7; Deut. xiv. 21, xxii. 6, 7, 10, xxv. 4.
† Exod. xxiii. 1--7. ‡ Lev. xix. 6. § Exod. xxii. 28. ‖ Deut. xxv. 13—16.
¶ Deut. xxii. 1, 2, 3. ** Lev. xvi. 1—30; Deut. xxiii. 17—19.
†† Lev. xi. 44, xviii. 3—5, xix. 10, 12, 14, 18, 25, 28, 30—32, 34, 37, xxii. 3, 8, 30—33, xxiii. 22, 43, xxv. 17, &c.
‡‡ Deut. iv. 1—40, v. 1—6, 25, viii. 1—19, x. 12, xi. 1, xxix. 1, xxx. 20. §§ Deut. x. 17, xxiii. 22, 23.
‖‖ Lev. xxvii. 1—33; Num. xxx. 2—15.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE.

(1) Division of Time,* p. 267.

I. Day and Night.—The Hebrews, in conformity with the Mosaical law, reckoned the day from evening to evening. The *natural day*, or the portion of time from sunrise to sunset, was divided, as it is now by the Arabians, into six unequal parts, as follow:—

1. *The break of day.*—The portion of time was at a recent period divided into two parts, in imitation of the Persians; the first of which began when the *eastern*, the second when the *western* division of the horizon was illuminated.

2. *The morning*, or *sunrise.*

3. *The heat of the day.*—This began about nine o'clock.†

4. *Mid-day.*

5. *The cool of the day*, literally "the *wind* of the day;" so called from the wind beginning to blow a few hours before sunset, and continuing until evening.‡

6. *The evening.*—This was divided into two parts, the first of which began, according to the Karaites and the Samaritans, at sunset; the second when it began to grow dark; but according to the Rabbins, the first commenced a little before sunset; the second precisely at sunset. The Arabian practice agrees with the first account; and in this way the Hebrews appear to have computed previously to the captivity.

Hours.—These are first mentioned in Dan. iii. 6, 15, v. 5, and do not appear to have been known by the Hebrews till they learnt thus to divide the day by them from the Babylonians during their captivity. The day was divided into twelve hours, which varied in length, being shorter in the winter and longer in the summer.§ The hours were numbered from the rising of the sun; so that at the season of the equinox, the third corresponded to the ninth of our reckoning, the sixth to our twelfth, and the ninth to our three o'clock in the afternoon. At other seasons of the year it is necessary to observe the time when the sun rises, and reduce the hours to our time accordingly. The sun in Palestine, at the summer solstice, rises at five of our time and sets about seven. At the winter solstice it rises about seven and sets about five. The hours of principal note among the Jews were the third, the sixth, and the ninth. They were consecrated by Daniel to prayer.*

Before the captivity the night was divided into three *watches*. The *first* continued till midnight;† the *second* was denominated the *middle-watch*, and continued from midnight till the crowing of the cock;‡ the *third*, called *the morning watch*, extended from the second to the rising of the sun. These divisions and names appear to have derived their origin from the watching of the Levites in the tabernacle and temple.§ In the time of Christ, however, the night, in imitation of the Romans, was divided into *four* watches. According to our mode of reckoning these were as follow:—

1. Ὀψέ, *the evening*, from twilight to nine o'clock.

2. Μεσονύκτιον, *the midnight*, from nine to twelve.

3. Ἀλεκτοροφωνία, *the cock-crowing*, from twelve to three.

4. Πρωΐ, from three o'clock to daybreak.

The assertions of the Talmudists in opposition to this statement are not to be regarded.

II. Weeks.—A period of seven days, under the usual name of a week, is mentioned as far back as the time of the deluge,‖ also in Gen. xxix. 27, 28. It must, therefore, be considered as a very ancient division of time, especially as the various nations among whom it has been noticed appear to have received it from the sons of Noah. The enumeration of the days of the week commenced with Sunday. Saturday was the last, or seventh, and was the Hebrew Sabbath, or day of rest. The Egyptians gave to the days of the week the same names that they assigned to the planets. From the circumstance that the sabbath was the principal day of the week, the whole period of seven days was also called a Sabbath.¶ The Jews, accordingly, in designating the successive days of the week, were accustomed to say, *the first day of the sabbath*, that is, of *the week*. *the second day of the sabbath*, namely, Sunday,

* This note is abridged from Jahn's sections on the subject. But some additional facts have been introduced from other sources, chiefly from Hales.

† Gen. xviii. 1; 1 Sam. xi. 11. ‡ Gen. iii. 8.

§ John xi. 9.

* Dan. vi. 10; comp. Acts ii. 15, iii. 1, x. 9.

† 1 Sam. ii. 19. ‡ Judg. vii. 19.

§ Exod. xiv. 24; 1 Sam. xi. 11.

‖ Gen. vii. 4, 10, viii. 10, 12.

¶ שבת, in the New Testament σάββατον and σάββατα.

Monday, &c.* In addition to the week of days, the Jews had three other seasons denominated weeks.†

1. *The week of weeks.*—This was a period of seven weeks or forty-nine days, which was succeeded on the fiftieth day by the feast of Pentecost.‡

2. *The week of years,* which was the period of seven years, during the last of which the land remained untilled, and the people enjoyed a sabbath, or season of rest.

3. *The week of seven sabbatical years,* being the period of forty-nine years, which was succeeded by the year of jubilee.§

III. MONTHS AND YEARS.—The lunar changes were doubtless first employed in the measurement of time. *Weeks,* however, were not, as some suppose, suggested by these changes, since four weeks make only twenty-eight days, while the lunar period is twenty-nine days and a half. Nor is it rational to suppose that the changes of the moon first suggested the method of computation by years. Years were regulated at first by the return of summer and winter. But when, in the progress of time, it was discovered that the ripe fruits, by which the year had previously been limited, regularly returned after about twelve lunar months, or 354 days, the year was regulated by those months, and restricted to that number of days. In the course of seventeen years, however, it was seen that, on the return of the same month, all the appearances of nature were reversed. Hence, as is evident from the history of the deluge, an attempt was made to regulate the months by the motions of the sun, and to assign to each of them thirty days. And such was the fixed length of the month among the Babylonians, Egyptians, Persians, and Grecians; but it was, nevertheless, observed, after ten or twenty years, that there was still a defect of five days.

Moses did not make any new arrangement in regard to the lunar months of the Hebrews, nor the year, which was solar; but in order to secure a proper reduction of the lunar to the solar year, he ordered the priests to present at the altar, on the second day of the passover, or the sixteenth day after the first new moon in April, a sheaf of ripe corn. For if they saw on the last month of the year that the grain would not be ripe, as expected, they were compelled to make an intercalation, which commonly happened on the third year.

* Mark xvi. 2, 9; Luke xxiv. 1; John xx. 1, 19.
† Lev. xxv. 1—17; Deut. xvi. 9, 10.
‡ Gr. πεντηκοστή, fifty.
§ Lev. xxv. 1—22, xxvi. 34.

After the departure from Egypt, there existed among the Hebrews two modes of reckoning the months of the year; the one *civil,* the other *sacred.* The beginning of the civil year was reckoned from the seventh month, or *Tishri,* that is, the first moon in October. The commencement of the sacred year was reckoned from the month Nisan, or the first new moon in April, because the Hebrews departed from Egypt on the fifteenth day of that month.* The prophets made use of this reckoning. The *civil* year, which was the more ancient, was used only in civil and agricultural concerns. The Jewish Rabbins say that March and September, instead of April and October, were the initial months of the two years. That they were so at a late period is admitted; but the change was probably owing to the example of the Romans, who begun their year with the month of March. The Jews being pleased with their example in this respect, or overruled by their authority, adopted the same practice. That this is the most probable statement, is evident also from the fact that the statement of the Rabbins is opposed, not only by Josephus, but by the usage of the Syriac and Arabic languages; from the fact also that the prescribed observance of the three great festival days will not agree with the months of March and September. The months originally had no appropriate names, but were distinguished by their order of succession,—the *first* month, the *second* month, &c., a custom which is still preserved among the Chinese and Japanese. But in process of time, the months came to be designated by the names of tutelar gods, heroes, characters of the seasons, or other local circumstances of different countries, to the great confusion and embarrassment of ancient calendars when compared together.

The Hebrew months were, in like manner, originally distinguished by their numeral order: thus the Deluge is described as beginning on the *second* month, and reaching its height in the *seventh* month, at the end of 150 days, and decreased until the *tenth* month, when the tops of the mountains were seen.† Afterwards the months acquired distinct names. Thus Moses gave to the *first* month of the sacred year the name of *Abib,*‡ signifying "*green,*" from the green ears of corn at that season, for it begun about the vernal equinox. The second month was named *Zif,* signifying, in Chaldee, "*glory,*" or "*splendour,*" in which the foundation of Solomon's Temple was laid.§ The seventh month was

* Exod. xii. 2. † Gen. vii. 11—24, viii. 4, 5.
‡ Exod. xii. 2, xiii. 4. § 1 Kings vi. 1.

called *Ethanim*, which is interpreted "*harvests*" in the Syriac version.* The eighth month was named *Bul*, from "*the fall*" of the leaf.†

Besides these names, given before the Babylonish captivity, there were others after. The first month was also called *Nisan*, signifying "*flight*," because in that month the Israelites fled from Egypt.‡ The third month, *Sivan*, signifying "*a bramble*."§ The sixth month, *Elul*, signifying "*mourning*," probably because it was the time of preparation for the great day of atonement on the tenth day of the seventh month.‖ The ninth month was called *Chisleu*, signifying "*chilled*," when the cold weather sets in and fires are lighted.* The tenth month was called *Tebeth*, signifying "*miry*."† The eleventh, *Shebet*, signifying "*a staff*," or "*a sceptre*."‡ And the twelfth, *Adar*, signifying "*a magnificent mantle*," probably from the profusion of flowers and plants with which, in warm climates, the earth then begins to be clothed.§

The following Table of the months we have drawn up so as to offer a comparison of the alternatives mentioned in the preceding statement, namely, that which makes March and that which makes April the initial month of the ecclesiastical year.

Sacred.	Civil.		Older Account.	Common Account.
I.	VII.	Abib, or Nisan, commenced with the new moon of .	April	March
II.	VIII.	Zif or Jyar	May	April
III.	IX.	Elul	June	May
IV.	X.	Thammuz	July	June
V.	XI.	Ab	August	July
VI.	XII.	Shebet	September	August
VII.	I.	Tishri	October	September
VIII.	II.	Bul or Marchesvan	November	October
IX.	III.	Chisleu	December	November
X.	IV.	Tebeth	January	December
XI.	V.	Shebet	February	January
XII.	VI.	Adar	March	February

The intercalary month, when employed, received the name of the month after which it came, and from which it was distinguished as the *second Adar*.

As the Egyptians and the Hebrews were the only nations who began their [civil] year at the autumnal equinox, it would seem that the latter had borrowed this custom from the former during their abode in Egypt; and that Moses, in directing the [sacred] year to commence at the vernal equinox, did no more than restore the older and more general practice.

It is well, in conclusion, to remark that the Jews and other Orientals reckoned any part of a period of time for the whole. Thus a part of a day is used for an entire day, or a part of a year for an entire year. Or, to adapt an illustration to our own computation, if a king came to the throne in December, 1830, and died in January, 1832, the Jews would say popularly that he reigned *three* years; although, in fact, his reign may only have lasted one year and a few days; while it is true that he reigned *in* three years, namely, 1830, 1831, 1832. In like manner, Jesus Christ is said to have lain *three* days in the grave, though he was entombed only about a day and a half, being from late on Friday afternoon to very early on Sunday morning. Attention to this circumstance will explain several apparent contradictions in the sacred writings.

Note.—The following is a list of authorities on the subjects embraced by this chapter. It may prove useful to those whose attention is directed to the study of Biblical antiquities. We must again acknowledge that our obligations to Jahn, in this chapter, exceed those under which we lie to all the others put together. The works we have found most serviceable have their titles printed in italics. As no works are named but such as we possess, or have had the means of consulting, it may possibly want some of value; but, on the other hand, we know that it includes many of great merit, of which the public has but little knowledge:—

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Betz, De Legum Hebræorum Forensium contra Idololatria, 1693.

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* 1 Kings viii. 2.
† 1 Kings viii. 2. ‡ Exod xii. 39.
§ Esth. iii. 7; Neh. ii. 1. ‖ Neh. vi. 15.

* Zech. vii. 1; Jer. xxxvi. 22. † Esth. ii. 16.
‡ Zech. i. 7. § Ezra vi. 15; Esth. iii. 7.

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D'Israeli, Genius of Judaism.
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——— (G. S.), Origin of Expiatory Sacrifice. 1827.
———, Horæ Mosaicæ.
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Lightfoot, Temple Service.
Lowman, A Rational of the Hebrew Ritual. 1748.
———. *A Dissertation on the Civil Government of the Hebrews,* 1741.
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———, De Idololatria, ed. Vossius. 1641.
———, De Sacrificiis: de Consecratione Calendarum, et de Ratione intercalandi, Lond. 1683.
———, De Juribus Anni septimi et Jubilæi.
———, De Apparatu Templi.
Maimonides, De Sabbato.
———, Yad Hachazakah, or the Main Principles of the Creed and Ethics of the Jews: translated by H. H. Bernard, Camb. 1832.
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Rhenferd, De Lepra cutis Hebræorum.
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———, De Jure Naturali et Gentium. 1640.
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Sykes, Essay on the Nature, Design, and Origin of Sacrifices.
Tappan, Lectures on Jewish Antiquities. 1807.
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CHAPTER VI.

THE WANDERING.



[Bedouins collecting Fruits in Palestine.]

The Israelites remained at the foot of Mount Sinai eleven months and nineteen days. During this time the necessary laws were given; the tabernacle was set up for the palace of the King, Jehovah; the regular service of his court was established; the sanctions of the law were solemnly repeated; the people were numbered and mustered for the approaching war; the order of their encamping, breaking up, and marching, was accurately settled; and the whole constitution of the state was completed.

On the twentieth day of the second month of the second year after their departure from Egypt, the Israelites were ordered to break up their encampment, and proceed on their march, to take possession of the Promised Land.

Under the direction of the miraculous cloud, the ark went on in advance, to determine the line of march, and the places of encampment. When, at any time, the ark, following the movements of the pillared cloud, began to set forward, Moses was wont to exclaim, "Arise, O Jehovah, and let thine enemies be scattered, and let those that hate thee flee before thee!" And when, under the same guidance, it rested, "Give rest, O Jehovah, to the multitudes of Israel!"

The general and leading command to depart for Sinai, appears to have been orally delivered; but on other removals, consequent on that general direction, it was a sufficient intimation of the command to remove, when the miraculous cloud withdrew from off the tabernacle, and moved forward. Whenever this was noticed, the several tribes struck their tents, and began to pack up their moveables, while the priests and Levites were engaged in taking down the tabernacle, and in disposing its parts on the carriages in which they were to be removed; and others covered up, and otherwise prepared for removal, the ark, the altars, the table of shew-bread, and the chandelier, which were to be borne on the shoulders of the Levites. All this would probably occasion but little delay: for the rapidity and ease with which the pastoral nations strike their tents, and get ready for a march, is quite astonishing to those who dwell in towns. When all was ready, the repeated sounding of the silver trumpets notified the time when each of the four *camps* was to move off the ground, in the order noticed in a preceding page; each tribe under its own banner and chiefs. As the tabernacle and the sacred utensils proceeded in the earlier part of the line, all was set up and properly arranged at the new encampment before the rear arrived on the ground; and, indeed, as the several tribes certainly encamped as they arrived, the greater part of the encampment would be formed by the time that the rearward tribe came up to take its place.

Several serious occurrences took place during the march through the desert to the borders of Canaan; and all tending, more or less, to manifest the intractable and debilitated character which their long-continued, and still recent, servitude had produced in the Hebrews; and which a slavery imposing *personal* obligations always has produced. The true secret of much of their conduct was that they had no *public spirit*—none of that spirit which enables men to understand the necessity of making unusual exertions, and of undergoing great privations for the attainment of the high objects set before them. Wanting this, they looked upon their leaders as children look towards their parents—as those who were bound to keep them in all comfort, and to make the paths they trod smooth and easy for them.

For nearly twelve months they had now remained much at their ease in the Sinai valleys, without any other general labour than the care of their flocks. As soon, therefore, as they had passed beyond the pleasant and shady valleys of the peninsula, and were fairly engaged in the stern and naked desert, they began to complain of the hardships and fatigues of the journey, and of the obligation of decamping and encamping so often. At the third stage these murmurs became so strong that their Divine King judged some afflictive mark of his displeasure necessary; wherefore he caused a fire (probably kindled by lightning) to break forth, and rage with great fury among the tents on the outskirts of the camp. In this the people recognised the hand of God, and interceded with Moses, at whose prayer the flames subsided. In memory of this the place received the name of Taberah [*the burning*].

It will be remembered that there were a considerable number of Egyptian vagabonds and other foreigners (probably runaway slaves) in the Hebrew host. The next affair, which seems to have followed the former very soon, commenced among these dangerous characters, but soon involved the mass of the Israelites. They became discontented with the manna. Pleasant though it were, the sameness of their diet disgusted them, and, heedless of the necessity of their circumstances, they longed for the palatable varieties of food which they had enjoyed in Egypt. The excellent meats of that country, and the abundant fish of its river—the luscious and cooling melons, the onions, the leeks, the garlick, and other fruits and vegetables of that rich soil, they had all been accustomed to eat "freely," so abundant were they, and so cheap. That they should grow tired of one particular kind of food, however delicious, when they had been used to such variety, and that they should look back upon their former enjoyments with some degree of longing and regret, is quite natural, and might not be blameworthy; but nothing can more strikingly show the unmanly character which bondage had produced in the then existing race of Hebrews, than that such merely sensual impulses were able to gain the mastery over them to such a degree as utterly to blind and confound their understanding. With childish weeping and unreasoning clamour they expressed their longing for the lost pleasures of Egypt, and their distaste of the manna, which had for so

many months formed their principal food.* As this clamour broke out so soon after the departure from the Sinai valleys in which they had so long been encamped, it seems very likely that they had secretly entertained the expectation that a change of scene would bring a change of food, and that they were much disappointed to find that the manna, and that only, continued to be supplied wherever they went.

The conduct of the people on this occasion was deeply displeasing to God; and Moses manifested more than usual discouragement and annoyance. His address to God on this occasion shows this, and is not altogether free from fretfulness. He rather murmurs at the heavy task which had been imposed upon him, of managing this unreasoning multitude, and declares himself unequal to it. In answer to this, God proposed to strengthen his authority by a council of seventy elders, to whom a portion of his own spirit should be formally given; and as to the people, a promise was indignantly made them that on the morrow, and for a month to come, they should "eat meat to the full." In reply to some doubts, which Moses ventured to intimate, as to the feasibility of supplying so large a multitude, the emphatic answer was, "Is the Lord's hand waxed short?"

Accordingly, on the next day the seventy elders were assembled about the door of the tabernacle, when the Lord, as he had promised, "came down in a cloud, and spoke to Moses; and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders;" not that thereby the divine spirit in Moses sustained any diminution, for, as the rabbins aptly illustrate, he was as "a burning and a shining light," from which many other lights might be kindled without its own brilliancy being lessened. And when the Seventy had received this spirit, "they began to prophesy,"—not in the sense of foretelling things to come, but of speaking on Divine things with some of that spontaneous fervour and eloquence which had hitherto been peculiar to Moses.

This council having been appointed for the express purpose of assisting Moses in the discharge of the arduous duties of his peculiar office, died with him. In the history of the succeeding periods, there is not the slightest mention of such a council, not even in those times when it must have acted a most important part, had it been in existence. When there was no chief magistrate, the whole business of the government would have belonged, properly, to this council of state. But we find no trace of such a council in the history of those times. There were also transactions of the deepest interest to the Hebrew commonwealth, in which such a council, if it had existed, could not fail to have been actively engaged; and if so engaged, it is incredible that the several historians should have agreed in that profound silence concerning it which they have observed. The rabbins, therefore, are not entitled to credit, when they assert that the council instituted by Moses continued uninterrupted to the latest times after the captivity, and that the same institution was perpetuated in the *Sanhedrim*, which existed after the times of the Maccabees.

The same day came the promised supply of meat—given not in kindness but in anger. As on a former occasion it consisted of immense flocks of quails, which, being wearied with their flight across the Red Sea, flew so low and heavily † that vast quantities of them were easily caught by the people. So abundant was the supply that not only were they enabled to glut themselves for the time, but to collect a quantity for future use. We are told that "they spread them abroad for themselves round about the camp." This was, perhaps, to let them dry, or to allow the salt to settle before they potted them away. We are not accustomed to

* Not necessarily their sole food. They had flocks and herds, and the ritual system made it sometimes *necessary* that they should indulge themselves with meat. From the same source they might derive milk, butter, and cheese, in the various preparations which are now in use among the Bedouins. The manna was principally a substitute for corn, which they could not well obtain, even by bartering the produce of their flocks, in the desert regions in which they wandered. Corn, or a substitute for it, was certainly essential to a people who had been brought up in such a corn country as Egypt. To the pure Bedouin it is not quite essential.

† This is the interpretation of all the Jewish writers, including Josephus, from whom it has been adopted by many eminent Christian commentators. While it may equally, or more than equally with the other, be deduced from the plain terms of the text, it certainly looks more probable than that the quails lay upon the ground three feet deep for a day's journey around the camp on every side, as the more common interpretation supposes. In that case nearly all of them must have been smothered, and thus, dying otherwise than by the knife, could not be eaten by the Hebrews. There are many other objections to this view, obvious to any one who considers all the circumstances.

hear of birds being preserved in any way, but it is remarkable that Herodotus * describes it as usual among the Egyptians to eat, undressed, *quails*, ducks, and small birds which they had preserved with salt. This is confirmed by the sculptures, where men are represented as in the act of preserving birds in this manner, and depositing them in jars. No doubt the Hebrews followed the same process, with which they had become acquainted in Egypt.

In the very height of their gormandising, or, as the Scripture expresses it, "while the flesh was yet between their teeth," a grievous plague was sent among them, whereby great numbers were destroyed. It is probable that the very indulgence for which they had longed was made the instrument of their punishment, and that the extraordinary mortality was, under the Divine control, occasioned by the excess of the people in the use of a kind of food so different from that on which they had for so many previous months been principally fed.

From this event the place took the name of Kibroth-hattaavah (*the graves of longing*), because in that place were buried numbers of the people who had longed for flesh.

The next principal encampment was at a place called Hazeroth. Here "a root of bitterness" sprung up, even in the very family of Moses. His sister Miriam, "the prophetess," had naturally taken the place of a chief woman in Israel: but when Moses had been joined by his wife, she began to feel or fear that her influence and station would be undermined. She therefore gave utterance to reflections which had the obvious tendency of throwing disgrace upon him for his connection with one who was not a daughter of Israel, but a Cushite (or Arabian) stranger. This was certainly a disadvantageous connection for the leader of such a people as the Hebrews; and, if brought prominently forward, and dilated upon in the ears of the people, was calculated to impair the influence of Moses, and to create dangerous jealousies,—the rather as the brother of the woman, and the clan of which he was the head, were present in the camp, and were treated with distinction and honour. The jealousy of Miriam is less strange than the fact that Aaron encouraged her, and sided with her. This may make us suspect that the cause of discontent may have lain deeper than appears; and that both Aaron and Miriam must have been discontented at, and willing to impair, the superiority of their younger brother. Aaron could not but know that, by the theory of the law, he was by virtue of his office the chief person in the state; and that the political functions of that office remained in abeyance while Moses occupied that high and extraordinary station, which, indeed, the Divine appointment compelled him to fill, but which the law itself did not recognise as involved in the ordinary course of administrative government. It is, however, less probable that Aaron and his sister sought to supersede Moses, than to obtain an equal share with him in the actual government of the people.† Something of this is involved in their claim to be "prophets" equally with him. We are not told that Moses said or did anything on this occasion; and this appears to have been remarked by some one of a later day, who in the original narrative has introduced the observation, "Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men that were upon the face of the earth."‡

Nor needed Moses take any part in the matter, for the Divine Voice, without any previous communication to him, summoned them all three to the door of the tabernacle. There Aaron and Miriam were rebuked from the sacred cloud, and were reminded that, although they had indeed been favoured with divine communications, yet the Lord had made himself known to them only in visions and dreams, whereas to Moses he had spoken "mouth to mouth, openly, and not in dark sayings, that he might clearly perceive the will of Jehovah." When the voice ceased it was found that Miriam had been smitten with leprosy. On this, Aaron, greatly humbled, confessed to Moses the foolishness and presumption of their mutual conduct, and begged him to intercede with God for the recovery of their sister. Moses did so; but as it was proper that the punishment should be as public as the offence, he could only obtain the promise that she should recover after she had been shut out from the camp seven days as a

* Herod. ii. 77.

† Bishop Hall remarks on this:—"It is a hard thing for a man willingly and gladly to see his equals lifted over his head in worth and opinion. Nothing will more try a man's grace than questions of emulation. That man hath true light who can be content to be a candle before the sun of others."

‡ Num. xii. 3.

polluted leper. This was done: and during the seven days of her exclusion the camp remained stationary.

The distance from Horeb to Kadesh Barnea, on the southern border of Canaan, was usually reckoned not more than eleven days' journey; but as it was "the time of the first ripe grapes" when the Hebrew host arrived at Kadesh, they must have spent five or six months on this journey.

When they reached that place Moses apprised them that they were now on the borders of their promised inheritance, and exhorted them to be of good courage in the acts of war by which they were to take possession. The elders gave the very judicious advice that, before any warlike operations were commenced, twelve persons, one from each tribe, should be sent to explore the country; and this counsel, having been sanctioned by the Divine command, was carried into effect. In those days, and long after, the office of a spy was counted highly honourable, and, as a post of danger and difficulty, was sought by heroes of the highest rank.* So, in the present instance, the persons chosen for this arduous service were all men of note, "rulers" in their several tribes. The charge which Moses gave them before they departed deserves great admiration from the skill with which, in a very few words, it states the points to which it was requisite they should direct their especial attention. "Go up southward, and go up to the mountain [Lebanon], and see what the land is, and the people that dwell in it, whether they be strong or weak, few or many; and whether the land in which they dwell be good or bad; and whether they dwell in open or fenced cities; and whether the soil be fat or lean; whether there be wood or not. And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land."†

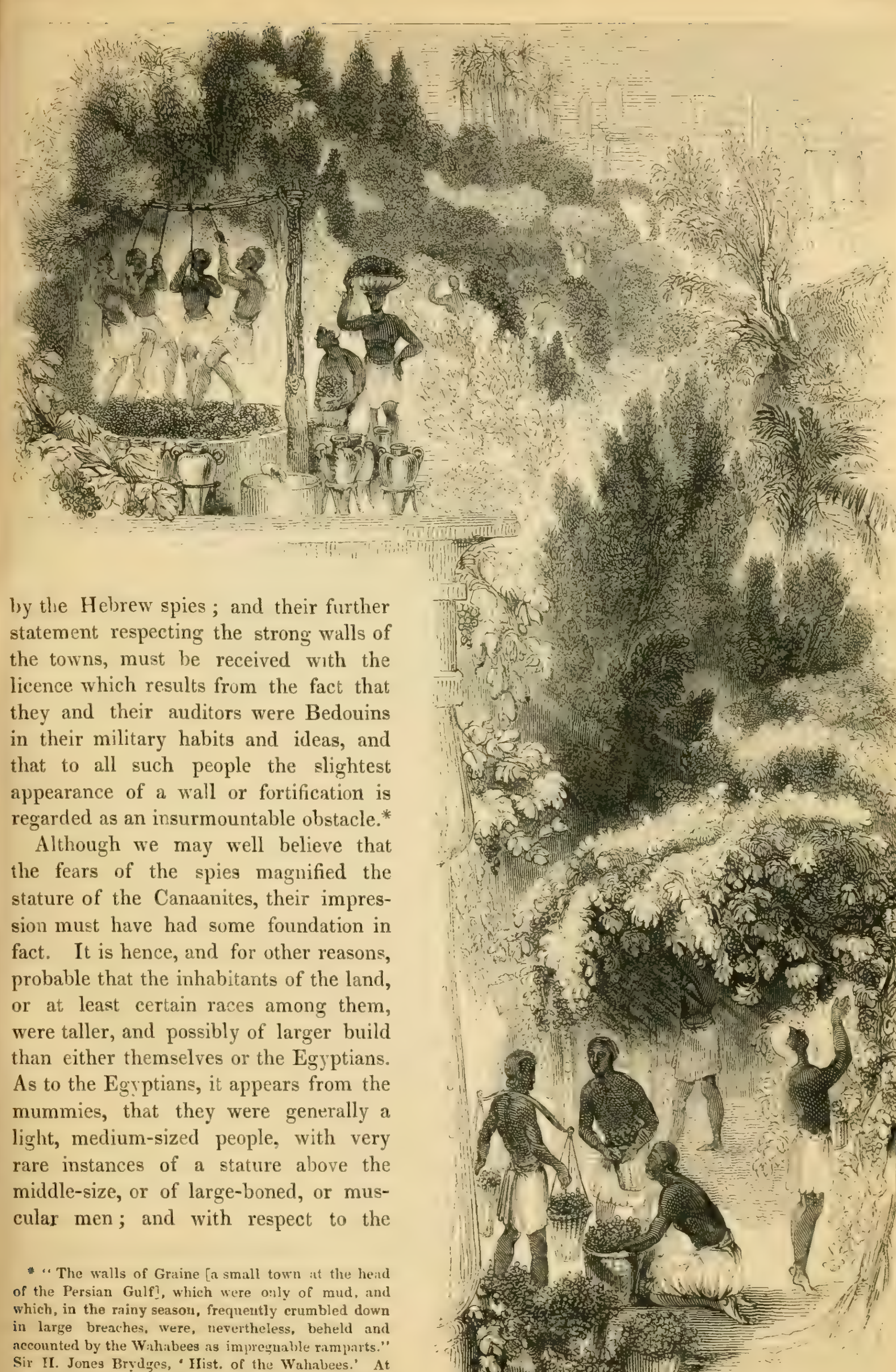
The spies appear to have accomplished their purpose without molestation. They traversed the whole extent of the country to Lebanon. On their return southward, they passed through the valley of Eshcol, where they were so much struck by the size and beauty of the vines,‡ that they broke off a branch to take with them to the camp, and to prevent the attached clusters from being bruised, bore it between two on a staff.

After an absence of forty days they returned to the camp. The grapes, the pomegranates, and the figs, which they brought with them as specimen fruits of the promised land, must have formed a most gratifying sight to the Hebrews; for although similar fruits were not unknown in Egypt, they are far inferior both in appearance and quality to those of Palestine. It has indeed been disputed, on the authority of some ancient writers, that Egypt afforded any vines; and if this had been true, we should have had a still stronger illustration of the delight with which the Hebrews must have beheld and tasted the fruit of the very excellent vines of Palestine. But that the vine was known in Egypt, and the juice of the grape expressed, is evinced by Gen. xl. 9—11, as well as by the paintings and sculptures of that ancient country, in which vineyards and vine-arbours are often represented, and the scenes of the vintage—the gathering of the grapes, and the treading in the wine-press—are very strikingly depicted, so as to convey interesting illustrations of the various allusions to the vintage which the sacred books contain.

The description which the spies gave to their eager listeners of the country through which they had passed, was highly favourable, especially when regarded as proceeding from men who had been brought up in one of the most fertile countries in the world. They described it as a good land,—"a land flowing with milk and honey." If this account of the land, accompanied by the sight of its pleasant fruits, excited the people to advance and take possession, their zeal was too speedily damped by the further account of the great stature,( ) strength, and courage of the inhabitants, and of the lofty position and strong fortifications of their cities.

A recent traveller informs us that on coming from Arabia, where the villages are, for the most part, found in valleys, he was much struck by seeing the villages and towns of Palestine standing loftily upon the hills. The same circumstance seems to have been strongly remarked

* See Homer, *passim.* † Num. xiii. 17—20. ‡ See the cut at the head of this chapter.



by the Hebrew spies; and their further statement respecting the strong walls of the towns, must be received with the licence which results from the fact that they and their auditors were Bedouins in their military habits and ideas, and that to all such people the slightest appearance of a wall or fortification is regarded as an insurmountable obstacle.*

Although we may well believe that the fears of the spies magnified the stature of the Canaanites, their impression must have had some foundation in fact. It is hence, and for other reasons, probable that the inhabitants of the land, or at least certain races among them, were taller, and possibly of larger build than either themselves or the Egyptians. As to the Egyptians, it appears from the mummies, that they were generally a light, medium-sized people, with very rare instances of a stature above the middle-size, or of large-boned, or muscular men; and with respect to the

* "The walls of Graine [a small town at the head of the Persian Gulf], which were only of mud, and which, in the rainy season, frequently crumbled down in large breaches, were, nevertheless, beheld and accounted by the Wahabees as impregnable ramparts." Sir H. Jones Brydges, 'Hist. of the Wahabees.' At Jericho, at the present day, an enclosing quickset hedge is found sufficient to protect the village from the incursions of the Bedouins.

[Egyptian Vintage.]

Israelites themselves, they were exposed to the same conditions which influenced the development of the Egyptian figure; and it may be remarked that the same circumstances which tended to promote their increase in Egypt, tended not less to check their growth. To this we may add that, even at the present day, very few men among the Jews rise above the middle European stature, while a more than ordinary proportion fall below it. The same absence of tall or large figures is also observed among the Arab tribes, which makes them appear rather a small race, although they generally seem to reach our medium standard. From this we think it may result that the appearance among the Canaanites of a much larger proportion of tall and large built men than they had been accustomed to see, would not inadequately account for the report of the Hebrew spies, after due allowance has been made for the exaggeration which their fears produced.

The people were filled with alarm by this account. They appear to have been unprepared to expect that any formidable obstacles would be opposed to their taking possession of the land promised to their fathers; and, utterly unmindful that the promises of their Divine King, confirmed by their past experience of his power, assured to them the victory in every conflict undertaken with his consent, they regarded as hopeless the enterprise before them, and abandoned themselves to despair. With extraordinary infatuation and cowardice, they believed themselves certain to fall by the sword of the Canaanites, and that their women and children would be enslaved. They even went so far as to suspect that this was really the Divine intention concerning them, and that it was only because the Lord hated them that he had brought them out of the land of Egypt. Caleb and Joshua, who had acted as spies for the two leading tribes of Judah and Ephraim, vainly endeavoured to counteract the effect which the report of the other ten had produced. Vainly did they assure the people that the obstacles were by no means so formidable as they had been led to apprehend; and as vainly did Moses direct their attention to the almighty power of that arm by which they had hitherto been guided and delivered. They would not be encouraged. This immense host spent the following night in tears, crying at times, "O that we had died in Egypt!" or "O that we might die in this wilderness!"

The general discontent and alarm soon ripened into a most dangerous insurrection, and at last they formed the monstrous resolution of appointing a leader to conduct them back to their bondage in Egypt. They, indeed, went so far as actually to appoint a leader (perhaps one of the ten spies) for the purpose.* "Verily this race were well worthy the rods of their Egyptian taskmasters, to whom they were so willing to return," we might say, did we not consider that it was by these rods that their spirits had been broken. Spiritless, however, as they were,—unfit as they were for action, and unwilling to be guided, the gross infatuation of their present course is most amazing. When they turned to fulfil their desperate purpose, could they expect that cloud would continue to guide them, the manna to feed them, and the "flinty rocks" to pour forth water for them? And, if they were unmindful of these things, what reception could they expect to meet from the Egyptians—all whose first-born had been slain, and whose fathers, brothers, and sons had perished in the Red Sea on their account? They might well expect that, if their lives were spared by that unforgiving people, their bondage would be made far more bitter, and their chains far heavier than they ever had been.

When their intention was announced, Moses and Aaron fell to the ground on their faces before all the people. Caleb and Joshua rent their clothes with grief and indignation, and renewed their former statements and remonstrances; but so mad were the people that they were about to stone these faithful men, and probably Moses and Aaron, who lay prostrate before them, as well, when—in that moment of intense excitement—the glory of Jehovah appeared in the cloud above the tabernacle, arresting every purpose, and infusing a new and present fear into every heart.

From that cloud their doom was pronounced. At the vehement entreaties of Moses their lives were not swept away at one immediate stroke. But still, it should be even as they had said. All that generation—all the men above twenty years of age when they left Egypt,

* Neh. ix 17.

—should be cut off from their portion in that rich inheritance which they had so basely intended to forego; they should all die in that wilderness—all leave their bones amidst its sands and solitudes, among which it was their doom to wander forty years (dated from the



[Rending Clothes.]

time of leaving Egypt), until none of them remained alive. From this extraordinary doom, which fixed to every man the extreme limit of his possible existence, and avowedly gave time no object but their deaths, Joshua and Caleb were excepted. Thus the two on whom they were about to inflict death, were destined to survive them all, and to become the chiefs and leaders of the new generation, on whom the inheritance of the promises was to devolve. The other ten spies, whose discouragements had formed the proximate cause of the insurrection, were smitten by some sudden death, in which the people recognised a punishment from God.

The people were thus made sensible of the folly of their past conduct. But this conviction had not, in the first instance, any salutary operation. For they attributed this doom to the cowardice they had displayed, rather than to its real cause,—their distrust of the sufficiency of their Divine King to perform the promises he had made. Therefore, with some hope, perhaps, of reversing the sentence which had been passed upon them, they valorously determined to attack the enemy forthwith—for the border Canaanites had already taken alarm, and, without taking any offensive measures against so apparently formidable a host as that of the Hebrews, remained in a state of preparation on the hills, ready to guard the passes of the country. Moses earnestly dissuaded them from this enterprise, as contrary to the declared intention of God, as well as against his command, that they should withdraw from the frontier and retire into the desert. But they persisted; perhaps from a latent desire, in their present fit of desperation, to try whether they might not be able even on their own resources, to arrest the doom which had gone forth against them. They were repulsed by the Canaanites with great slaughter. The ebullition of courage under which they had acted would have been but of short duration, even had it been attended with better success in the first instance. By their repulse, they were very forcibly instructed that they were,

of themselves, unequal to the conquest of the country; and were hence induced to yield a sullen acquiescence in a measure, with which they would hardly have been satisfied unless this salutary conviction of their own weakness had been realized.

Thus they turned from the borders of "the pleasant land" to wander for thirty-eight years in the Arabian wildernesses.

The history of these years is very briefly told in the original narrative. In Numbers xxxiii. there is a list of the principal stations of the Israelites, from the time they left Egypt till they arrived on the banks of the Jordan. It, therefore, includes the places of their principal encampment during these years of wandering. Much pains have been bestowed by some writers on the investigation of this list, and in the endeavour to trace the various names which are there given. The result scarcely seems worth the labour. The names cannot be traced; and if they could, it appears of little consequence to know at what places the Hebrew host encamped while they were wandering to and fro in the deserts, between the Sinai mountains and the borders of Canaan, without any definite purpose, save to consume the time and the people, or to seek an exchange of pasture ground.

During the long interval of the wandering, several new laws were promulgated. Only two of the incidents which occurred during this period are deemed of sufficient consequence to be recorded; and of these, neither the time nor place is named.

The first was the case of the sabbath-breaker, already alluded to, (p. 266), who was found gathering sticks on the sabbath-day. Although this crime had been forbidden, no punishment had been annexed to it; and therefore the man was kept in custody till the Divine commands could be taken. The order received was that he should be taken without the camp, and there stoned to death. This was done.

The other was an affair of far greater importance; as it indicated a wide-spread dissatisfaction among the hereditary chiefs of the people, ending in a most formidable conspiracy to wrest the priesthood from Aaron, and the civil power from the hand of Moses.

One Korah, a family-chief of the same branch of the Levitical tribe to which Moses and Aaron belonged, seems to have been the head of this conspiracy. The other leaders were Dathan, Abiram and On, all of the tribe of Reuben; who were probably induced to come forward on the ground of the right of primogeniture—the extinction of which by Jacob they would not seem to have recognized to the extent which the existing distribution of civil and sacerdotal authority indicated. No less than two hundred and fifty more of the principal and most influential chiefs of different tribes were drawn into this combination; and it seems to have been popular with the people as soon as its object was avowed.

That object appears to us to have been misunderstood by all the writers to whose statements on the subject we have had occasion to refer. We find it stated as an attempt of the conspiring chiefs to usurp the sacerdotal functions, or else the civil and sacerdotal functions as jointly exercised by Moses and Aaron. But we cannot see on what claim of this sort, chiefs of tribes so opposed in interests as those of Levi and Reuben, were likely to agree, and not only they, but chiefs of probably all the different tribes as well. If the pretension was the priesthood, who was the claimant? Not Korah; for then would the Reubenites, who had the *hereditary* claim, have supported *his* claim? Not the Reubenites; for then was the proud Levite likely to support this new claim to a dignity which was already in his tribe? And then, if the object had been the possession of paramount civil power by either of these parties, was this an object which the two most powerful tribes, Judah and Ephraim, were likely to support, or which they were not far more likely to oppose. We consider that it was, altogether, an attempt to overthrow the general government as established by the law; and that this took the form of an attack of the priesthood, chiefly because that that was the more obvious and established feature of the general government. The authority of Moses was probably felt to be merely an incident, for the transmission of which the law made no provision. Although, therefore, even his authority was not unassaulted, it was less the ostensible object of the combination than that of his brother. Under this view it will not appear that any one of the confederated parties aspired to the priesthood; but that there was a general conspiracy among

the leading men of several tribes to restore things to their original footing when the priesthood and the civil authority went together with the birthright, throughout the larger and smaller sectional divisions,—tribes, clans, and families of the people. Their charge against Moses and Aaron was that they had taken away the former liberties of the people; which, being interpreted, means, that they had organised their loosely compacted tribes into a nation, and subjected them to a general government. Apart from such an explanation as this, it seems impossible to understand the equal pretensions of *all* the parties to the exercise of sacerdotal functions; without the least intimation that they all concurred in supporting the claims of any one particular party. But although there are obvious considerations which preclude the supposition that the appropriation of the priesthood to himself was the *avowed* object of Korah, in which he was supported by the other parties; there is much reason to conclude, from the manner in which Moses (when he saw through his designs) spoke to him, that this was his real and ulterior object.

There are indications that the Reubenites, while they desired as heartily as the others to overturn the existing plan of government, were rather afraid of the ulterior objects of Korah and of making common cause with him. Perhaps they were fearful that by so doing they should seem to compromise what they wished to regard as the self-evident character of the claims they derived from the usual laws of primogeniture.

In short, with some attention, we may perceive three parties agreeing to overturn the present ecclesiastical and civil government, and agreeing also in one common pretence, the liberties of the people; but having their several grounds of discontent, and differing, secretly at least, in their final objects. Korah appears to have felt that since the Levites were set apart as a sacred tribe, and the priesthood confined to one family in that tribe, his own rank therein * gave him a preferable claim to that dignity. The two hundred and fifty chiefs who joined him appear to have desired to reclaim, as a right of primogeniture, the sacerdotal privileges which had been transferred to the tribe of Levi. And the Reubenites probably felt aggrieved that Moses in all his arrangements acted on the will of Jacob as a reality, excluding Reuben from the ordinary pre-eminence of the first-born, and placing Judah and the sons of Joseph before him.

When the conspirators judged things ripe for an open rupture, they met in a body, and, presenting themselves before Moses and Aaron, they upbraided them with their unjust ambition, in engrossing all power in their own hands, and excluding the rest of the people, who were all, as much as they, the people of God. Moses was much astonished at this speech; but he administered in reply a cutting rebuke to the ambitious Korah, and assured him and his confederates that, however they might gloss this matter to themselves and others, their proceedings were really levelled against the government of the King Jehovah. To Him, who was the author of the appointments of which they complained, he would leave it to decide who should be the ministers of his service, and who should be held worthy to approach his presence. He therefore desired them to assemble on the morrow at the tabernacle, with censers, to offer incense to God, who would doubtless take the occasion of making his will known.

It is observable that the chiefs of Reuben, Dathan and Abiram,† were not present on this occasion. But whatever was the ground of their absence, they took care it should be known that it was not from any indifference to the cause in which they were engaged: for, when Moses sent for them to be present on the morrow with the others, they returned a very smart refusal, in terms which threw much light on the state of feeling that then prevailed:—"We will not come up. Is it a small thing that thou hast brought us up out of a land that floweth with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, except thou make thyself altogether a prince over us? Moreover, thou hast not brought us into a land that floweth with milk and honey, or given us inheritance of fields and vineyards: wilt

* Josephus says he was wealthy, and that he was older than Moses.

† The other Reubenite, On, is not named except in the first instance. It is generally thought that he separated from his party after he heard what Moses said. The rabbins allege that his wife persuaded him to relinquish his part in this dangerous enterprise.

thou blind the eyes of these men?—We will not come up." This answer, involving an appeal to the misconceptions and prejudices of the people, was manifestly framed for *their* ears more than for those of Moses. And as, by "the men" whom, they allege, Moses intended to blind, Korah and the others are doubtless denoted, they appear to have disapproved of the proposed trial, of the result of which they might well entertain some doubts, and to have thought it the better course not to commit their own claims and pretensions to the same issue.

Mild and forbearing as Moses usually was in all that concerned himself, his indignation rose very high when he received this reproachful message. He called God to witness the injustice of the charge it contained, since so far had he been from using his power to enrich or aggrandise himself, that he had as yet reaped nothing but care and sorrow from it.

The morrow came; and all Israel anxiously awaited what that day might bring forth. Korah and his two hundred and fifty associates were true to their appointment, and appeared before the tabernacle with censers. They were attended by a vast host of their more active partisans, who seem, from the expressions employed, to have represented the sympathies and sentiments of the bulk of the community, who appear to have stood awaiting the event before their tents.

Moses and Aaron were with or near the conspirators, where they stood prepared to offer incense. But at that moment, the Shechinah, that glorious symbol of the Divine presence, which usually abode in the inmost sanctuary, appeared at the door of the tabernacle; and a voice was heard therefrom, commanding Moses and Aaron,—"Separate yourselves from this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment." On hearing this they both fell upon their faces, and entreated that he would not be wroth with the misguided people for the evil into which they had been drawn by one ambitious man. A compliance with this prayer, it respecting all but the ringleaders, was involved in the direction which they received to go to the tents of Dathan and Abiram, and warn the people off from the neighbourhood of their tents. Warned by the supernatural appearance at the entrance of the tabernacle, the people obeyed. Moses then addressed them, and appealed for the authority of his commission to the prodigy which was about to follow. No sooner had he spoken, than the earth opened and engulphed the present rebels and all that belonged to them: while at the same instant, Korah and his party, who remained before the tabernacle, were struck dead by fire from heaven. Thus awfully perished the men who wished to make subservient to their own ends the discontent which they excited among the people.

But even this awful example was not sufficient to allay the ferment which had been excited. It is true that mutinous mob fled with horror and alarm from the doom which befel their leaders. But, with a degree of infatuation and insane hardihood, which is rarely to be found but among the blind instruments of popular commotions, they assembled tumultuously the very next day, and clamoured against Moses and Aaron, saying:—"Ye have slain the people of the Lord." Yesterday they had been spared: but the welfare, the very existence of the nation, required that a memorable example to all future time should now be made. God, therefore, sent a fearful plague among them, which spread rapidly through their ranks, and before which they fell down in sudden death.

No sooner did the brothers perceive that the wrath of God was raging among the riotous crowd, than Aaron, at the instance of Moses, took a censer, and, filled with the most deep compassion and animated by all-conquering faith, he therewith rushed into the crowd, and planted himself between the living and the dead, as if to stay that storm of death, and say, "thus far shalt thou come, and no further." With this noble act God was well pleased, and stayed the hand of the destroyer; but not until fourteen hundred people had fallen before him.

It was evident that to persons of the most consequence and influence in the nation, the appointment of Aaron to the hereditary priesthood was so distasteful, that only the most sensible evidence that the appointment was indeed divine, could bring them to submit to it. One would think that the recent events would have been sufficient to convince the most doubt-

ful of this. Perhaps for the time it was so. But God was pleased, by a new prodigy, to afford an abiding testimony of his preference. None but the princes of the tribes were likely to think their claims to that high office equal or preferable to those of Aaron; or, at all events, if they, who were highest in dignity, were satisfied, or silenced, none of those below them could fairly make complaint. The princes of the twelve tribes and Aaron were therefore commanded to take, each of them, an almond rod, and write thereon the name of his tribe. These rods, with Aaron's rod among them, were solemnly deposited before the ark of the covenant. The next morning they were brought forth from thence; and it was found that while the other rods remained in their former state, the rod of Aaron was covered with leaves, and blossoms, and ripened fruit. All the people admired this mild and significant prodigy, and peace was re-established in Israel. The rod was directed to be laid up in the sanctuary that it might remain an abiding testimony of the divine appointments, which do not, indeed, seem to have been ever after called in question.

At length the fortieth year from the deliverance commenced. By this time the doom of the former generation had been accomplished. They had all died gradually away. The new race which now stood in their place were scarcely less turbulent and rebellious than their fathers; but they had grown up in the free air of the desert, the chain of bondage had not rusted their souls, and their necks had not been fretted by the yoke. They were therefore more hardy in their frames, and in their hearts more courageous and enterprising than their fathers. They had also been brought up under the theocracy; and its forms and principles were familiar to them, however imperfectly they were as yet imbued with its spirit.

As the appointed time drew nigh, they were conducted again to Kadesh,—that place between the borders of Canaan and Edom, where their fathers had received their doom, to die in the wilderness.

Miriam died soon after their arrival at this place, and was buried there. The Jews have a notion that she was the legislatrix and ruler of the Hebrew women, as her brother was of the men.

While they tarried at this place water failed them. There the recollections of what the elder portion of the population had seen, and of what the younger had heard of Egypt* and of its abundant and glorious river, revived, and they assailed Moses with the old reproaches, because he had not suffered them to remain in that fruitful land, but had brought them into that "evil place," which was, they complained, "no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates, neither is there any water to drink." Moses and Aaron received the command of God to take the old wonder-working rod or staff [not that which had budded], and smite therewith a certain rock from which water should flow in abundance. They did this; but in doing it manifested some degree of impatience and distrust of Jehovah, in consequence of which they were told that they should not be allowed to enter the promised land. To Moses, however, was granted the indulgence of viewing that land afar off, although not permitted to set his foot upon it.

Palestine seems at this time to have been of difficult access on the southern frontier. Besides being, as we have elsewhere described, a hilly region, traversed by narrow passes and valleys, and therefore of comparatively easy defence, the hills were crowned by forts and fortified towns which were at that time considered strong and formidable. It was also occupied by brave and vigilant warriors, by whom every foot of ground was likely to be disputed. In this southern part of the country, near Hebron, were the tall sons of Anak, the very sight of whom had struck the spies with terror thirty-eight years before. In advancing in this direction, they would also have their old and much dreaded enemies, the Philistines, on their left hand; and they were not likely to remain quiet witnesses of the progress of the Israelites in that quarter. From the concurrence of these causes, it did actually happen that this quarter of

* It will be recollected that the older and leading part of the present population, being those under twenty years of age on leaving Egypt, could remember that country well. Two-thirds of the present race had probably been born in the desert; but even they must have heard constant talk of the splendid country from which their fathers had been brought.

the country was not fully subdued till the time of David. This country also, in many respects, was less desirable and fertile than the more central parts, as has been abundantly shown in the descriptive portion of this work.

On all these accounts together, it was manifestly less desirable that the Hebrew host should enter at the south, and fight their way northward through the whole extent of the country, than that they should at once, if possible, establish themselves in the central part of the country, which was not only the richest, but the least defensible, and from thence extend their power right and left, into the portions of country between which they would thus be thrown.

This was actually the course which was determined to be taken. But to this end it was necessary that the Israelites should take a circuit round the southern end of the Dead Sea, and march northward along its eastern border, in order to pass the Jordan and establish themselves at once in the very heart of the country to be conquered; and in effecting this design it would be desirable to pass through the kingdom of the Edomites, and necessary to traverse those of the Moabites and Amorites, nations with whom the Hebrews had no quarrel, and with two of which, as being allied to themselves by blood, they were expressly forbidden to wage war.

The mountains of Seir, which the Edomites at this time occupied, bound the valley of Araba on the east, and extend all the way from the Dead Sea to the Elanitic Gulf. They offer only one valley through which a large and encumbered army could pass from the western to the eastern plains. This is the valley of El Ghoeyr, which opens into the Araba at about forty-five miles to the south of the Dead Sea. As it afforded by far the most convenient and shortest route which the Israelites could take, it doubtless forms "the king's highway" through which Moses desired from the Edomites permission for the Israelites to pass. The negotiation, if it may be so called, for this purpose, is curious from the illustration which it offers of the practices which then prevailed as to the very important point of international law, involved in the conditions on which an army might expect permission to march, for warlike purposes, through the territories of a neutral or friendly power.

At this time the eighth king of the Edomites was upon the throne. Eleven princes were subordinate to him; so that the king was, in fact, no more than the chief of twelve princes,—a relic of the patriarchal form of government to which the Edomites, in common with all ancient nations, were originally subject.* This empire seems, in the time of Moses, to have been in a very flourishing condition. Mention is incidentally made of eight considerable cities, and also of fields, vineyards, and highways in this country.†

Moses had previously been cautioned by God not in any way to meddle injuriously with the Edomites; for Mount Seir had been given to Esau, in the possession of which his descendants were not to be disturbed. Therefore, in marching through or along their country, they were charged to maintain a strict discipline, and to pay scrupulously for whatever food or water they required.

Accordingly, when Moses sent from Kadesh, to request from the king of Edom a free passage through his territory, the ambassadors were charged with the following message,—"Thus saith thy brother Israel, Thou knowest all the travail that hath befallen us: how our fathers went down into Egypt, and we have dwelt in Egypt a long time: and the Egyptians afflicted us and our fathers: And when we cried unto Jehovah he heard our voice, and sent an angel, and hath brought us forth out of Egypt: and behold we are in Kadesh, a city in the uttermost of thy border. Let us pass, we pray thee, through thy country: *we will not pass through the fields, or through the vineyards, nor will we drink water out of the wells; we will march through the king's highway: we will not turn to the right hand or to the left, until we have passed through thy borders.*"

The king of Edom was afraid to admit such an immense body of armed men into his country, and sent a plain refusal to let them pass, and threatened to oppose by arms any attempt they might make to do so.

* Gen. xvii. 20, xxxvi. 31—44.

† Gen. xxxvi. 31—39; Num. xx. 17, 21, 22.

The Israelites, whose experience in the desert had made them extremely sensible of the value of water, and of the necessity of husbanding a limited supply, suspected that the principal fear of the king was, lest they should exhaust or waste the water in the wells and reservoirs from which the inhabitants derived their supply of water during the season in which the rivers were dried up. They, therefore, sent back to assure him, that they desired nothing but leave "to pass through on their feet," and that they would most willingly pay for whatever water they and their cattle might need. But the king was inexorable, and made a display of his forces to intimidate them. The frontier was so strong on this side that it was hardly possible for the Hebrews to force a passage, if they had been so minded. It was, therefore, resolved to take a circuitous route—that is, to return southward, and pass to the other side of these mountains at the point where they terminate, near the head of the Elanitic Gulf. They would then turn northward, and march along the borders of the high plains, which lie beyond these mountains eastward.

They, therefore, proceeded down the broad valley of Araba, till they reached the foot of Mount Hor, where they encamped.* To the top of that mountain, Moses, Aaron, and Eleazer proceeded, according to Divine direction, in the sight of all the people, and there Aaron died and was buried. The tomb which is now seen afar on the top of that mountain, in all probability marks the spot of his death and sepulture. The Moslems, who highly honour the memory of Aaron, hold this tomb in great reverence, and offer sacrifices there.

Thus died a man rendered eminent by the circumstances in which he was placed, and by the important part he took in the deliverance of Israel, and in the establishment of the Hebrew commonwealth. If his unequal temperament, and the facility of his disposition, disqualified him for the higher place which his younger brother so ably filled, and amply justifies and explains the divine preference, we must still acknowledge that the services which he rendered were neither few nor unimportant, and were, of their kind, indispensably necessary.

From the place which the circumstance occupies in the narrative, it would seem that it was while they were encamped at this place, although other considerations would rather indicate that it was at Kadesh that the outposts of the Hebrew camp were attacked by one of the Canaanitish nations on the southern border of Palestine. Their leader is called the king of Arad; and most of the Jewish writers think they were a tribe of Amalekites, which, under all the circumstances, is not very unlikely. This attack was so far successful that the Canaanites were able to carry off several Israelites as captives. On this, the Hebrews put the whole invading tribe, with their cities, under that solemn vow of devotement to utter destruction, which, under its proper name of *cherem*, we have described in a previous page (278). This vow they were enabled to accomplish when they ultimately came again in contact with the same people, in the great warfare which they waged against the Canaanites. Then they utterly destroyed this people and their cities, and called the name of the land Hormah, —*the devoted place.*†

The people having considered their wandering in the desert nearly at an end, and having made up their minds for a shorter and more pleasant route, were greatly disappointed at this retrograde movement—this delay in their anticipated change of life and diet, and renewal of the fatigues and privations which they had deemed to be all but ended. As they pursued their difficult way down the waterless and sandy Araba, their discontent gathered strength, and at last began to vent itself in the usual manner:—"Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For we have neither bread nor water, and our soul loatheth this light food." For this offence the Lord refused to protect them from the mortal bites of the serpents which infested the region to which they now came, and which are described by Burckhardt as still abounding in a neighbouring district.‡ They are called "*fiery* serpents," either from the inflammation caused by their bites or from their fiery and splendid appearance. Under punishment this generation behaved better than their fathers. In the present case they went to Moses, confessed that they had sinned, and implored him to

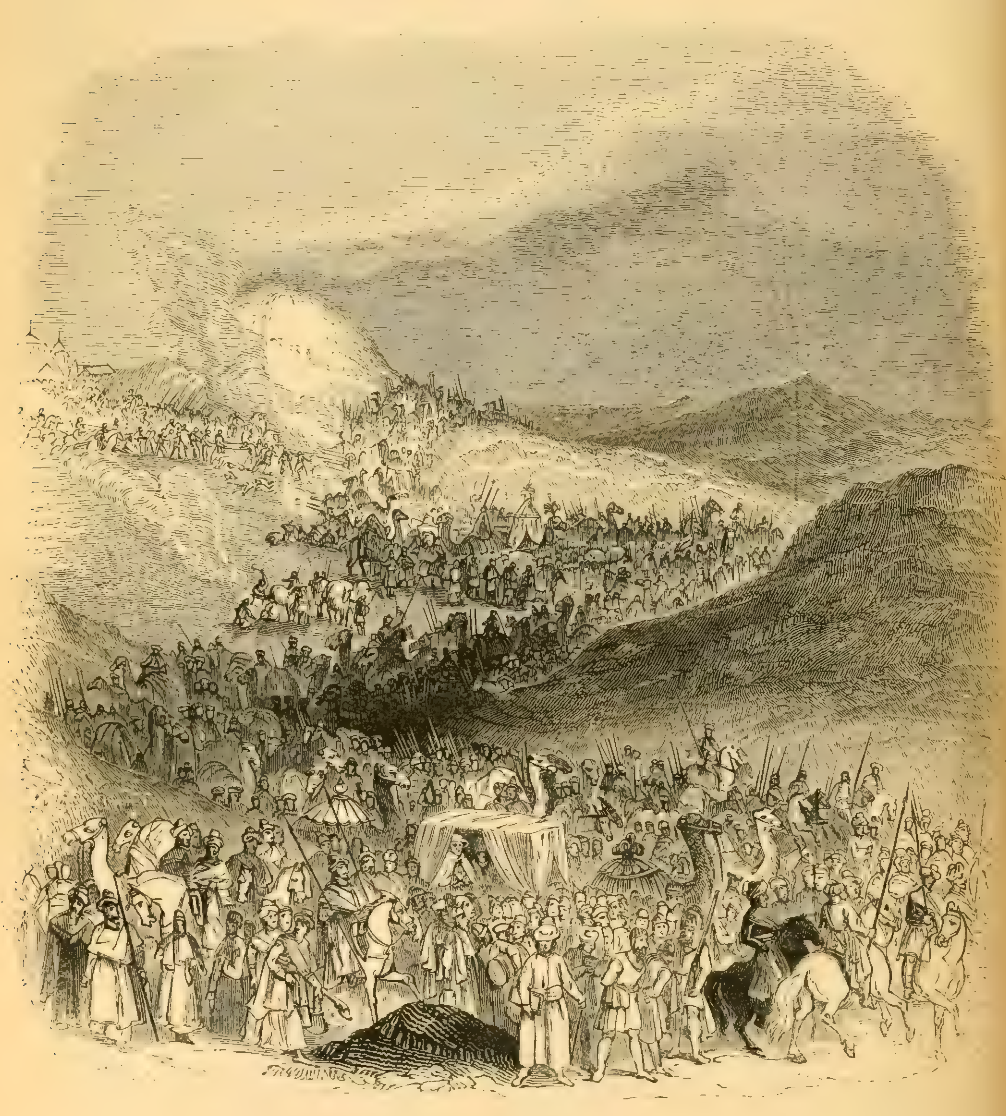
* Mount Hor has been described, and a view of it given in p. xliv. of the 'Physical History.'

† Comp. Num. xxi. 1—3; Josh. xii. 14; Judg. i. 16, 17.

‡ 'Travels in Syria,' p. 499, 500.

intercede for them. On this, Moses, at the command of God, made the figure of a serpent in brass, and elevated it upon a pole in the midst of the camp; and it was the Divine appointment that whoever looked upon this ensign, which Christ declares to have been designed as an emblem of Himself crucified,* instantly recovered of his mortal wound. But many of the people had died before this mysterious remedy was given. The brazen serpent was preserved as a memorial of this miracle till the time of Hezekiah, who ordered it to be destroyed on account of the superstitious regard which the Israelites then paid to it.†

Corrected by this experience, the people went on patiently the remainder of their way.



[March of the Pilgrim Caravan.]

When, having rounded the mountains, on the south, they turned northward, marching along the eastern and more exposed frontier of Edom, the descendants of Esau were afraid to molest

* John iii. 14, 15. † 2 Kings xviii. 4.

or irritate them; but, on the contrary, brought them provisions and water for sale.* In like manner, the few inhabitants now found in that quarter derive much profit from the sale of the produce of their fields and orchards to the great caravan which yearly marches the same road on its way between Damascus and Mecca.†

The desert wanderings of the Israelites may be considered to have ended when they arrived at the brook Zared, a stream which flows towards the southern extremity of the Dead Sea,‡ and which at this time seems to have formed the boundary between the territories of Edom and Moab. Along the borders and in the valley of this stream they encamped. Here, before entering the land of Moab, the Israelites were warned that this land formed no part of their promised inheritance. It had been given to the descendants of Lot, whom they were charged not to molest. The Moabites, on their part, offered no opposition to the march of the Hebrews through their territory; though it may be suspected that it was less good will than fear that prevented their refusal. So the Israelites pursued their march to the banks of the river Arnon, where they encamped.

In former times the territories of Moab had extended considerably to the north of that river. But before this, a division of the Amorites, being probably driven thereto by the increase of their numbers in Canaan, had crossed the Jordan in search of a new settlement. They expelled the descendants of Lot from all that part of their territory which lay to the north of the Arnon, and occupied it in their room. The Amorites were among the Canaanites, against whom the Israelites were to wage an exterminating war. But this applied to them only as inhabitants of Canaan; for they made no claim of the country east of the Jordan, and had no commission to wage war with any of its inhabitants.

The Israelites therefore sent ambassadors to Sihon, the king of the Amorites, whose metropolis was Heshbon, requesting permission to pass through his country in the same terms which they had previously employed in making a similar application to the king of Edom. Remembering that the Amorites were Canaanites, and closely connected with the tribes on the other side the river, and considering the very serious objections they might entertain to the settlement of the Israelites in their neighbourhood, it is not surprising that Sihon not only refused to permit them to pass through his country, but actually advanced with his forces to prevent them from crossing the Arnon. Having obtained the permission of their Divine King to meet the Amorites in battle, with the assured promise of victory, the new race of Hebrews advanced courageously to their first essay of arms. The two armies met near Jahaz. The alacrity which the Israelites exhibited in meeting them half way considerably damped the valour of the Amorites. Their ranks were broken at the first onset, and they fled to seek the shelter of their towns. But the greater part were slain in the pursuit, in which the Hebrews had great advantage; for not only were they, from their life in the desert, active and hardy in their frames, but lightly armed, and skilled in the use of missile weapons, the sling, the dart, and the bow. The king himself was slain; and the Israelites took possession, by right of conquest, of his dominion, which comprised that fine territory which extends between the rivers Arnon and Jabbok. This country, having the Jordan on the west, was thus bounded by three fine streams, and not only possessed a fertile soil and rich pastures, but was already well settled, containing towns and villages and cultivated lands.§

This acquisition, however, brought the Israelites close to the southern frontier of the kingdom of Bashan, which reached to the river Jabbok. Og, the king of this country, was of the race of the old Rephaim, who inhabited the same country in the time of Abraham. To give some idea of his bulk and stature,(2) the historian informs that his bedstead was of iron,(3) and measured four yards and a half long, by two yards wide.‖ This monarch is described by Josephus as a friend and ally of Sihon, and had been marching to his assistance; when, find-

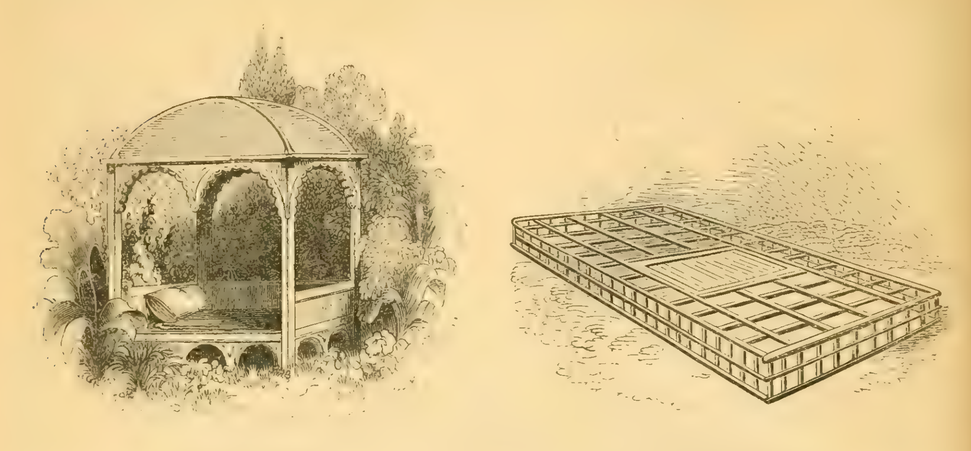
* Deut. ii. 29. † Burckhardt, p. 405.

‡ Captains Irby and Mangles are probably right in identifying this brook with the El Ahsa, as that is the most southerly of the streams which enter the Dead Sea, and therefore the first which the Israelites would reach in their northward journey.

§ See Josephus, iv. 5, 1, 2.

‖ "Nine cubits was the length thereof, and four cubits the breadth of it, after the cubit of a man." (Deut. iii. 11.) But as a bedstead is larger than the man for whose use it is intended, Og's stature was doubtless less—perhaps about nine feet.

ing that he was already defeated and slain, he determined to avenge him and to expel the intruders But, in attempting to execute this intention, he was himself slain in battle with



[Garden Bedstead.] [Palm-branch Bedstead.]

the Hebrews, and all his army destroyed. Moses then crossed the Jabbok and overran the country, taking possession of the sixty walled towns which it contained. Thus the Israelites were led into the occupation of a rich and beautiful country which they had not designed or expected to obtain, extending from the river Arnon to the roots of Anti-Lebanon.

With the Ammonites the Israelites did not interfere, although they lay close, on the east, to their new dominions. For this there were two reasons,—that they had been forbidden to disturb the children of Lot, and that the frontier of the Ammonites was very strong.

The Moabites were doubtless well pleased to witness the overthrow of their old enemies and conquerors, the Amorites. But this was all of satisfaction they could find in the late events. They considered that they had a fair claim to the lands occupied by the Amorites, stronger than that which the Hebrews derived from their recent conquest; and it was by no means a satisfaction to them to see thus suddenly established in their neighbourhood a power which combined the authority and resources which had previously been divided between two states, either of which had been singly a sufficient, or more than sufficient, match for themselves. They could not but apprehend danger from such neighbourhood, not probably being aware that the Israelites had been forbidden to disturb the children of Lot in the territory which they actually occupied. But the Moabites had sufficiently profited by the overthrow of Sihon and Og to be aware that they could not, in their own resources, risk any hostile movement against the Hebrews. Balak, the king of Moab, therefore sought to strengthen himself by the assistance of such of the widely-dispersed tribes of Midian (descended from the son of Abraham by Keturah) as were then pasturing their flocks in the eastern plains. The emirs of Midian readily yielded their assistance (doubtless allured by the prospect of rich spoil). And they, who had been accustomed to wander far with their flocks, and herds, and in commercial caravans, which bare to Syria and to Egypt the rich productions of the remoter East, told Balak of a famous prophet or diviner, Balaam by name, who dwelt beyond the Euphrates. This man saw far into the future, and his words were of such power, that whatsoever he cursed was certainly accursed, and whatsoever he blessed was blessed indeed. They therefore concluded that before they committed themselves by any hostile acts, it would be best to send for this wondrous man, that he might lay the heavy burden of his curse upon the host of Israel. The expediency of this course was probably suggested by the appearance of a religious character in the march and encampment of the Israelites, with their splendid tabernacle and ritual service, and with the evident proofs which were offered, that they were under the special care and direction of some supernatural power. Hence they judged it useless to act against this favoured

people, until the supernatural blessing under which they prospered were neutralised by the supernatural power of a curse from the Mesopotamian prophet.

Persons of consideration were sent from both parties, with suitable presents, to fetch Balaam from Mesopotamia. They were well received by the prophet, whom we take to have been not an idolatrous diviner, but an ill-disposed prophet of the true God,—such as we know there were in later times. He promised to give the messengers an answer in the morning, and when the morning came he told them that he could not go, for the people whom he was desired to curse were blessed of God.

The king of Moab and the emirs of Midian were but little satisfied with this answer. They



[Egyptian Asses, saddled (Ancient).]



[Egyptian Asses, saddled (Modern).]

ent again by personages of higher rank than before and more in number to renew the request

in more urgent terms, and with the promise of great wealth and high honours for his reward. Balaam, who greatly desired to go, that he might reap all the benefits offered to him, was reluctant to act at once on his former instructions, and repeat his refusal; but hoping to receive permission, desired the messengers to await an answer till the morning. In the night he was told he might go if the messengers positively insisted on his going with them; but, in that case, he was, on his arrival, to act as he should be then instructed. The overjoyed prophet got up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, on which animal men of holy callings in the East still affect to ride.* He then called the messengers, and told them that he was at liberty to go with them, but could still only act according to the instructions he might receive.

This over-readiness of the prophet, from the desire of gain, to avail himself of the conditional leave he had obtained, while he knew that he could only satisfy the king by cursing those whom the Lord had blessed, was deeply displeasing to God. As he rode along, his ass suddenly refused to proceed; and when, with redoubled blows, he endeavoured to urge him on, a human voice was given to the animal to complain of the treatment it received. In the anger of the moment the prophet was heedless of the miracle, and returned a passionate answer; when suddenly his eyes were opened to behold "things invisible to mortal sight," and he saw the cause of his beast's refractoriness,—an angel of God stood in the way, with a drawn sword to intercept his path. He was now apprised of the Divine displeasure at his conduct, and was told that he had been struck dead unless his ass, seeing the angel, had refused to proceed. On this Balaam humbled himself, and expressed his readiness to return home if so commanded. But he was told he might go on; but was enjoined to act in future precisely as he should be directed. Indeed, it is manifest that this adventure on the road was intended to teach him the necessity of strict and literal obedience to his orders, however distasteful they might be to him. This suggests an adequate cause for what has seemed to some a preposterous and needless incident.

At the end of his journey his arrival was hailed with great joy by the princes of Moab and Midian; but this was somewhat checked by his telling them that he could act but as the involuntary organ of a higher power, whose behests he could not gainsay.

The prophet was however taken by the king to the summit of a mountain, from which he could command a view of the Hebrew encampment, laid out before him in all its order and beauty, with the splendid tabernacle of Jehovah standing apart in the central square, in the place usually occupied by the tent of the emir or the king. He was much impressed by the sight; and when the spirit of prophecy came upon him, he cried,—

> "How can I curse whom God hath not cursed?
> How can I execrate whom Jehovah hath not execrated?"

and then proceeded to "bless them altogether." The king was deeply mortified at this result; and he successively took Balaam to different points, from which views might be commanded of different portions of the Israelite camp, in the hope that although the prophet might not be allowed to curse the whole, there was some portion on which the weight of his ban might be laid. But on all these occasions, Balaam was compelled to break forth into blessings, and into prophecies of the future glories and victories of Israel. He alluded, not obscurely, to the triumphs of David, in the king who was to extend the power of Israel over the neighbouring state, the respective dooms of which, in being ultimately brought under the Hebrew sceptre, he clearly foretold.(4) Even Moab was not excepted. All these prophecies and blessings were delivered with as much force and power of poetic expression as can be found in any of the later prophets; and this it may be important to note, as showing that the spirit of inspiration wrought as powerfully in the most unwilling as in the most willing instruments. There is much interest to us in the expressions of admiration which the view of the Hebrew encampment extorts from a person so experienced in camps as Balaam; and behold-

* The saddles of asses, so often mentioned in Scripture, were, doubtless, such as our cuts exhibit. In the one instance *(ancient)* they are merely mats or quilted cloths, similar to those still in use, although now a kind of pad is often used, such as that shown in the other (modern) engraving.

ing it from the vantage ground on which his impressions place us, we have a more distinct notion of its beautiful order than we could otherwise realize. At the first view, he cried,—

> "When, from the tops of the rocks, I see them,
> And from the lofty hills I behold them ;—
> Lo! they are a people that shall dwell alone,
> And shall not be reckoned among the nations.
> Who shall count the dust-like seed of Jacob?
> Who shall number the multitude of Israel?"

Again, the second time,—

> "Behold! I have received a command to bless,—
> For God hath blessed, and I cannot revoke it.
> I behold no trouble in Jacob,
> Nor do I see distress in Israel.
> Jehovah their God is with them,
> And to him they shout as their king."

And another time, we are expressly told that it was when he saw "Israel encamped according to their tribes" that he exclaimed,—

> "How beautiful are thy tents, O Jacob!
> And thy tabernacles, O Israel!
> As vales planted with groves ;*
> Like gardens by the side of a river;
> Like lign-aloes planted by Jehovah;
> As cedars by water streams."

In the end, Balak would have been very willing that Balaam should "Neither bless them at all nor curse them at all," and was unutterably humbled that his design had been so strangely and entirely reversed. Balaam himself was, no doubt, quite as much disappointed, as he was obliged to depart without the rewards and honours by which he had been tempted. As we afterwards find him among the Midianites, it would seem that instead of returning home he went no further than from the Moabites to them; or else that he went home and afterwards returned. But, either before his set out or after his return, he gave the pernicious and fatal advice, that the only way to weaken the Israelites and bring them into trouble would be by drawing them aside to the worship of the native gods; for then their own God would be provoked, and would withdraw His protection from them, in which case they might easily be vanquished. And he suggested that the beauty of the native women might well be made the instrument of this seduction.

The chiefs of Moab and Midian spared nothing to carry this most pernicious council into effect. A seemingly amicable intercourse was opened with the Israelites, by means of which the most beautiful females of the two nations were purposely brought under the notice of the ardent and undisciplined youth of the Hebrew cause. They fell into the snare thus cunningly laid for them. Great numbers of them yielded up their souls to their fair enslavers; and, rather than be separated from them, refused the observance of those peculiar laws which rendered a free and equal intercourse with strangers and idolaters impossible. These barriers being overleaped, there was but a step to a participation in the idolatrous services of the gods worshipped in those parts. Indeed, as the chief of those gods was the obscene Baalpeor, it is far more than likely that the intercourse between the Hebrews and these "fair idolatresses" was in itself made to seem an act of idolatrous service. Certain it is, that the people allowed themselves to be drawn to worship the gods of Moab, and eat of their sacrifices; and many of them were not ashamed to wear openly the obscene badges of Baalpeor.

Any long continuance of this state of affairs would have involved nothing less than the complete overthrow of the whole system of religion, government, and morals, which had been established with so much pains and difficulty; and now, at the moment for action, would have compelled the abandonment of all the high objects which had so long been kept before the view of the nation. The severest measures of correction were hence necessary. God therefore sent a most destructive plague among them; and besides this, Moses was commanded to order the judges to slay all the men, in the several divisions over which they pre-

* This and most of the other images, obviously alludes to the parallel lines of tents, forming streets, or roads, like vales.

sided, who were seen wearing the badges of Baalpeor. This was done; but the plague went raging on, and the camp was full of lamentation, when the prince of a chief house in the tribe of Simeon, Zimri by name, was seen openly conducting Cozbi, the daughter of one of the Midianitish emirs to his tent. This cool proceeding, at such a time of calamity, roused the indignation of Phineas, the grandson of Aaron, and son of the present high priest, Eleazar; and, acting on the burning impulse of the moment, he took a spear and followed the parties to the tent, and there slew them both at one thrust. This act, under peculiar circumstances, which would prevent it from being adduced as a precedent, was accepted by God as one of atonement, for instantly the plague ceased. The number who perished on this occasion was 24,000.*

As the Midianites had been more active than the Moabites in this affair—perhaps because their semi-nomade habits enabled themselves and their females to associate more freely with the Israelites than was possible to a more settled people like the Moabites,—Moses was commanded to denounce war against them. As this war was only against the adjoining tribes who had been immediately engaged in this disgraceful and insidious policy, a draft of 12,000 picked men, 1000 from each tribe was judged sufficient. Against these Midianites the war was declared to be one of extermination, on the same principle as that which in modern times adjudges death to the foreigners who excite a people to rebellion against their rightful king. Here, as in many other cases, transactions in the early Hebrew history are liable to be misunderstood whenever we allow ourselves to forget that Jehovah was really and practically the King of the Hebrew people.

This small army, without the loss of a single man, took ample vengeance on the Midianites. The Israelites descended like a storm upon the country, carrying fire and sword wherever they went. The towns and strongholds were destroyed, and every man who fell into their hands was put to the sword. Among these were five emirs,—the chiefs, probably, of as many tribes or clans; and with them Balaam the prophet reaped the wages of his iniquity. They saved all the women and children, and finally returned to the camp with an immense booty, consisting of 675,000 sheep, 70,000 beeves, and 60,000 asses, besides upwards of 8000 ounces of gold, in various ornaments of that metal, such as chains, bracelets, rings, ear-rings, and some uncertain ornament which appears to have been worn upon the breast. From this account of the spoil, the Midianites appear to have been a wealthy semi-pastoral people, and (as the ornaments seem to be those of the men) studious of splendour in their attire. Ear-rings do not appear to have been worn by men among many of the more civilized nations of antiquity, not, for instance, by the Egyptians; but among the sculptured antiquities of that people several foreign nations are represented with this ornament, as shown in the annexed engraving.



[Ear-rings of Men.]

When the victors returned with their captives and spoil, Moses was very wroth that the women had been spared, seeing that they had been the exciting cause of the recent calamities and sins. He therefore commanded that all of them should be slain excepting the young

* St. Paul says (1 Cor, x. 8) that "twenty *three* thousand persons died by the plague;" and, as the original number is 24,000, it has been reasonably conjectured that this is the full number, but that 1000 were slain by the judges, and the rest by the plague.

virgins, who were to be kept as domestic slaves. All the male children he also ordered to be put to death. Infidelity has made a stand upon this conduct of Moses, as equally unjust and cruel. It may be answered that, when not acting under the Divine orders—and there is no mention of any command of God on this occasion—Moses was but a man, and liable as such to errors in policy and feeling, from passion or prejudice. The destruction of the very guilty women might be vindicated by such considerations of justice with respect to the past and of policy with reference to the future, as, we suspect, would have caused little hesitation in any of the chiefs of ancient nations, who rarely allowed any considerations to interfere with their views of policy; but the slaughter of the unoffending male children is very difficult to justify, and no satisfactory reason appears why they might not have been put on the same footing with the female children. As the Hebrew word rendered "children" comprehends grown youths as well as infants,—in short, all under twenty years of age,—it is no doubt true that the mass of these were old enough to have received the taint of paternal corruption, and to have remembered with vengeful hearts the fate of their fathers, mothers, and sisters; and these considerations, doubtless, had their weight with Moses as well as the force of the terrible example which this massacre would offer. Even to this case, therefore, the following sensible observations of Jahn will, in some degree, apply, while they bear generally on those seeming severities of the Hebrew system of war, which we shall have frequent occasion to notice and explain:—

"Anciently war was characterised by deeds of ferocity and cruelty. The Hebrews have, therefore, a claim to our forgiveness, if, in some instances, they resorted to those cruel measures, which were universally prevalent in their day, in order to strike terror upon other nations, to deter them from committing injuries upon themselves, and to secure their own tranquillity. There are some things, however, in their history which cannot be approved.* Still, as was said above, their severity in all instances cannot be condemned; for it is permitted by the natural law of nations, to a people, to inflict as many and as great evils upon an enemy as shall be sufficient to deter others from committing the like offence. The prevalent state of feeling among nations, whether it tend to kindness or cruelty, will determine how much is necessary to secure such an object. Nations anciently could not exhibit that humanity and forbearance in war which are common among modern European nations, without leaving themselves exposed to every sort of injury.† The general character of Hebrew warfare was comparatively mild and humane."‡ That this statement is true we shall ourselves be able, as occasion offers, to show, by adducing illustrations from the war usages of the ancient Egyptians, of whose "civilization" so high an opinion is now entertained; as well as from the existing usages of eastern nations. Several of the general usages of Hebrew warfare were brought into operation on this occasion, and may well be noticed in this place.

It will be observed that all the males were trained to the use of arms—or rather, were understood to be able to use arms; for, as now in eastern countries, every one probably acquainted himself with the use of arms for the purpose of self-defence. This is natural in a crude state of society, in which every one has cause to consider it probable that he shall be in circumstances to act hostilely or defensively against others. All the men capable of bearing arms were enrolled in the public registers, by the *genealogists* (*shoterim*), under the direction of the princes of the several tribes. In case of war, those who were to be called into actual service were taken from such as were thus enrolled, the whole body not being expected to take the field except on extraordinary occasions. In immediate prospect of war, the levy was made by the *genealogists*.§

As might be expected in a theocracy, priests were appointed to go with the army, in some sort, as ministers of the Divine King. Their presence was considered a sanction to the undertakings, which, in consequence, they had doubtless considerable share in controlling. It was, however, their principal duty to direct the attention of the army to the Invisible King as their

* Judg. viii. 4-21, xx. i *et seq.*; 2 Kings xv. 16; 2 Chron. xxv. 12.

† Num. xxxi. 14. *et seq.*; 2 Sam. ii. 31; comp. 2 Sam. x. 1—5, xi. 1; Amos i. 13; 2 Sam. viii. 8, 7; comp. 2 Kings iii. 27 Amos ii. 1.

‡ 2 Sam. viii. 2; 1 Kings xx. 30—43; 2 Kings vi. 21—23; 2 Chron. xxviii. 8.

§ Deut. xx. 5—9.

actual Leader, who in a just cause would surely give them the victory, and to whom the glory of that victory should be ascribed. It was therefore they who gave the signal of attack by blowing the silver trumpets, and they who addressed the men before the action. The words they employed were :—" Hear, O Israel! You approach this day unto battle against your enemies. Let not your hearts faint : fear not, tremble not, be not terrified because of them. For Jehovah your God is He that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you."* In later times, however, generals and kings relieved the priests from the duty of addressing the troops. On the present occasion, Phineas, the son of the high-priest, was he who went with the army ; and the Jewish writers inform us that the priest, or rather, we suppose, the chief of the priests who went with the army, was considered as representing the high-priest, and was, in fact, the high-priest for the purposes of the war ; and that for this purpose he previously underwent the ceremony of anointing, from which he is called " the Anointed for the War." All this is very likely, except the anointing, of which we have considerable doubt.

The manner in which the spoil taken from the Midianites was divided, was probably not new, or peculiar to the Hebrews ; but offers a valuable illustration of ancient usages on this subject. As the troops were regarded as citizens, engaged in a cause in which they had a personal interest, they received no wages or even subsistence while engaged in service. Hence it was considered but just that they should look to the spoils of the enemy as the reward of their toils and dangers. To encourage individual prowess, a warrior was entitled to appropriate to himself whatever spoils he might personally win : hence, in the present case, the articles of gold, &c., were considered the property of the soldiers ; and as such they made a free offering of it as an oblation to their Divine King.† But the living prey, whether of cattle or men, were subject to an equal division,—that is, the flocks and captives were placed together and numbered. They were then divided into two parts, one of which was given to the great body of the men fit for war who had remained at home, subject to a deduction of one-fiftieth part for the Levites; the other half belonged to the smaller body who had been actually engaged, subject only to the deduction of a five-hundredth part for the priests. It appears that, in order to render the division more equal, the flocks, cattle, and captives were all publicly sold, and the money which they produced was divided in these proportions.

It also appears, from the example offered on this occasion, that when the army returned home, and before it was disbanded, the officers took an account of the men under their charge, and reported to the chief magistrate the number that were missing. (5)

Some of the Hebrew tribes had more abundant possessions of flocks and herds than others. Among these were those of Reuben and Gad. These tribes observed that the land conquered from Sihon and Og abounded in rich pastures (which is true even to this day), and doubting that they could be better provided for anywhere else ; they saw also that this country offered them the advantage of sending out their flocks into the open deserts on the east and south-east, which might not be easily realized in a country shut up between the river and the sea. They therefore applied to Moses, desiring to have this land assigned them for their inheritance; in consideration of which they were willing to relinquish their claim to a possession in the land of Canaan. Moses at first thought that they were disposed to seek their rest too soon in a land which all the tribes had helped to conquer. But when he understood that they were quite willing that all the men but such as it might be necessary to leave for the protection of their families and property, should go over Jordan with the other tribes, to assist them in their wars, he very much approved of their proposal, and agreed to their request. But as this territory seemed disproportionately large for two tribes only, he included half the tribe of Manasseh in the grant. Reuben had the southern part, which the Amorites had taken from Moab, and re-established Heshbon, (6) which had been the capital of Sihon ; Gad got the central part, which the Amorites had formerly conquered from the Ammonites, including more than a half of the land of Gilead ; and the half-tribe of Manasseh received the northernmost portion,

* Deut. xx. 2—4. † Num. xxxi. 50.

comprehending the rest of Gilead with the territories of Og, king of Bashan, of which the chief towns were Ashtaroth and Edrei (7).

And now, towards the end of the forty years, during which the Israelites had been, for their sins, kept back from their promised heritage, it was deemed advisable that a new registration of the people might be taken, and a comparison made with the census which had been taken, in the first year, in Sinai. It might thus be made evident, on the face of the record, that the Divine judgment had been accomplished in the appointed time, in consequence of which the existing race were in a condition to enter the Promised Land. It was also of some importance on other grounds that this enumeration should be made before the people entered upon those cruel wars in which they were about to engage. The results of this inquiry and comparison showed that of that evil generation which was above twenty years of age on leaving Egypt, only two persons, besides Moses, remained alive; and these two, Caleb and Joshua, were the very persons, who, on account of their deservings, had been by name excepted from the general doom. Nothing could be better calculated than this, on the one hand, to encourage the existing race, by assuring them that they were the special objects of the Divine notice and providence; and, on the other, to humble them, by bringing home to every family and to every individual the conviction of the certainty of those judgments which were declared against misdoers (8).

It appeared also that the population, notwithstanding the great and rapid change of its materials, was but little altered in its amount. The resulting difference was but 1820—being the amount of the *decrease* as compared with the former census; but of the tribe of Levi, which had received an *increase* of 727, the difference is reduced to little more than 1000. But although the whole numbers were so singularly near each other, there was a great and remarkable difference in the details. This will be best shown by the following comparative table, which we transcribe from "The Pictorial Bible":—

	First Year.	Last Year	Increase.	Decrease.
Reuben	46,500	43,730	——	2,770
Simeon	59,300	22,200	——	37,100
Gad	45,650	40,500	——	5,150
Judah	74,600	76,500	1,900	——
Issachar	54,400	64,300	9,900	——
Zebulun	57,400	60,500	3,100	——
Ephraim	40,500	32,500	——	8,000
Manasseh	32,200	52,700	20,500	——
Benjamin	35,400	45,600	10,200	——
Dan	62,700	64,400	1,700	——
Asher	41,500	53,400	11,900	——
Naphtali	53,400	45,400	——	8,000
	603,550	601,730	59,200	61,020
			Decrease on the whole	1,820
Levites, from a month old	22,273	23,000	727	——

The result of this forty years' wandering in the desert, and of that expurgation, which in its effect left but two men who were above sixty years of age, must have presented a body of men, who, physically and morally speaking, were singularly calculated for the great and arduous enterprises which lay before them.

The forty years were now well-nigh closed, and all things were ready for the advance into the Promised Land. Moses therefore knew the day of his death could not be distant, for he had been warned that it was not his privilege to lead the people who had so long engaged his care into their inheritance; but only to behold it afar off. Indeed, his years had already been protracted to the utmost span to which man's life then reached; but although not less than 120 years old, his eye was not yet dim nor his natural strength abated. The last acts of this able and good man we shall describe in the words of Professor Jahn, whose statements it is always a pleasure to be able to introduce :—

"Moses, having directed the Hebrews thus far during his life, wished to do all in his power to preserve the knowledge and worship of JEHOVAH among them after his death. The people,

and even the magistrates, during the forty years of his administration, were far from being thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the theocracy which he had established. They had so often rebelled, and offered sacrifice to idols, that it became necessary to have all animals slain at the altar, and under the inspection of the priests. In their journeyings through the wilderness, they had carried with them portable shrines of Egyptian idols;* and it was but a short time since they had been guilty of the grossest idolatry.† It was evidently necessary that religion should be made to them, as much as possible, an object of sense; that it should be so closely interwoven with the civil institution that it could be neither forgotten nor perverted; and it was particularly desirable that the new generation should be made to perceive the nature of their polity, and the relation in which they stood to the true God.

Moses accordingly wrote for the people an earnest exhortation to obedience, in which he alluded to the instances of the kindness, severity, and providence of God, which the Hebrews had already experienced; he exhibited in a strong light the sanctions of the law; he repeated the most important statutes, and added a few new ones to the code. These exhortations (which compose his fifth book, or Deuteronomy) he delivered to the magistrates as his farewell address, at a time when their minds were well prepared to receive wholesome instruction by the accomplishment of the Divine promises which had already commenced. The genealogists, each in his own circle, communicated all to the people, including the women and the children.‡

That the latest generations might have a visible and permanent memorial of their duty, he directed that, after they had taken possession of Canaan, the law (or at least its fundamental principles, and the first development of its sanctions, as exhibited in Exod. xx.—xxiv.) should be engraved on pillars of stone, plastered with lime, and that these pillars should be erected with appropriate solemnity at Shechem on Mount Ebal, or, more probably, Mount Gerizim. On this occasion the priests were to utter particular imprecations against all the secret transgressors of the law, to which the people were to assent by responding "*Amen!*" at the end of each imprecation.§

Moses then developed a second time, and still more minutely than before, the conditions on which Jehovah, their God and king, would govern them. He cast a prophetic glance into the most distant futurity, while he declared the different destinies which awaited them to the latest generations, according to their conduct in regard to the law. In full view of these conditions, and in order to impress them the more deeply on their minds, he caused the whole people, even the women and children, again to take a solemn oath of obedience; and that, not only for themselves, but also for their posterity.‖

The official duties of Moses were now closed. He commissioned Joshua, not as his successor, but as a military leader divinely appointed, to be the conqueror of the land of Canaan, and to portion it out among the victors. He delivered to the priests the whole book of the law, that they might deposit it in the sanctuary with the ark of the covenant. He also left them a song, in which he represented in the most vivid manner the perverseness of the nation, their future disobedience and punishment, repentance and pardon. This song the Hebrews were to commit to memory, that they might be aware of the consequences of disobedience, and that, when the threatenings were fulfilled, they might think of the law and return to their duty. Finally, he viewed the land of Canaan from Nebo, the summit of Mount Pisgah;¶ and then this great man, and distinguished servant of God, was gathered to his fathers.**

By the institutions which he introduced, for the preservation of the knowledge of God, he was the means of conferring an invaluable favour, not only on the Hebrews, but on the whole human race; a favour for which no wise or good man can withhold from him his gratitude, whatever objections he may imagine can be brought against some of his laws."

* In the original "portable tabernacles of Saturn;" but the reader will be prepared by the statements in the early part of the last chapter to see that our alteration is right.

† Amos v. 26; Acts vii. 23; Num. xxv. 1—9. ‡ Deut. xxix. 20. § Deut. xxvii. 2—26.

‖ Deut. xxviii. 1—68, xxix. xxx. ¶ See 'Physical History,' p. . ** Deut. xxxi.—xxxiv.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES.

(1) Giants, p. 308.—We can only allow ourselves room for a few observations on this subject, which involves some questions of considerable interest, to which, although we should be willing enough to discuss them fully, we can, in this place, but barely allude.

For such a limited object as we now propose to ourselves, it seems best to ascertain in the first instance what the Scriptures say on the subject, and then to observe whether there are any such points in this statement as offer difficulties and require elucidation.

First, we are told of the times before the deluge, "there were giants on the earth in those days."* But as the word rendered giants is of disputed interpretation in this text, we will not dwell on it as bearing conclusively on the subject. The word certainly, however, does mean giants in some places; and, indeed, it happens to be the very same term by which the spies designated the men in Canaan, whose tall stature had filled them with alarm. One thing is clear to our minds,—that if these antediluvians were giants (as seems, upon the whole, not unlikely), they are intended to be described as being *then* a rare and singular people; and that it is far, as some have supposed, from implying that the antediluvians generally were of gigantic stature. Their long lives have been adduced as favourable to this conclusion; the rather as it is probable that the time of their growth was protracted in proportion to the entire duration of their existence; and as they held life under conditions highly favourable to health and to the development of their forms, as proved by their prolonged lives. But this will not stand the test of those comparative observations which form the only materials through which a probably safe conclusion can be reached. For we do not generally find that the longest lived animals are of the largest size or tallest stature. The elephant, it is true, lives long; but the horse, and many other animals larger than man, are old before man himself reaches his prime.

The evidence of no authentic remains can be brought to bear on the question. The accounts of enormous bones dug up, which *must* have belonged to persons fourteen, sixteen, eighteen, twenty, or twenty-five feet high, astonished our fathers: but nobody doubts now that they belonged to elephants, whales, and extinct animals. The fact, indeed, that there were, in the most ancient times, animals upon the earth larger than any that now exist, might seem at the first to bear favourably on the hypothesis to which we refer. But it does in fact the reverse. For these animals are *extinct*, whereas, to make out the analogy, they ought to survive in diminished forms. But on the other hand, the skeletons of elephants and other animals have been found, of far earlier date than any human remains which have been discovered. And these do not differ in size from the existing species. Now the same physical changes which, on the hypothesis stated, affected the size of the human race, by gradually reducing it to its present standard, might be expected to have affected the size of other animals. But as this has not been the case with them, so neither, probably, has it been the case with man. Besides, if these bones of alleged giants had really been human bones, we could have no evidence that they were antediluvians, or that, whether antediluvians or postdiluvians, they were other than exceptions, as gigantic men are now, to the then average stature of the human race.

The only authentic human remains of very ancient date are the Egyptian mummies. Hundreds of these have been examined, and as few, or fewer, than at the present time have been found to exceed our middle stature. This is so far satisfactory, as showing that there has been no decrease for the last three or four thousand years. But the instance does not bear on the antediluvian or early postdiluvian question, as the persons whose embalmed corpses have been brought to light all lived within the period during which the term of life has been nearly at the same standard as now.

Leaving this part of the question, we will see what notices of giants occur *after* the deluge.

Moses himself sometimes, and all the subsequent sacred writers, describe giants by the word *Rephaim*. This, in its restricted sense, is a Gentile term denoting the gigantic descendants of one Rephah, but came to be applied to giants in general. This is clear, for other gigantic races are described as giants by that word; which use of the word as well as the fact that

* Gen. vi. 4.

Og, the only one of that race who remained in its original seat in the time of Moses, is clearly described as a giant. Bashan, over which Og ruled in the time of Moses, was their original country. At least, they were there in the time of Abraham, and were routed by Chedorlaomer.* Again, in Deut. ii. 10, 11, we are told respecting the country afterwards called "the land of Moab," that "the Emim dwelt therein in times past; a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakim; which also were accounted giants (*rephaim*) as the Anakim; but the Moabites call them Emim." The country of the Ammonites was "also accounted a land of giants (*rephaim*): giants (*rephaim*) dwelt therein of old time; and the Ammonites call them Zamzummim,—a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakim; but Jehovah destroyed them before them; and they succeeded them and dwelt in their stead." (v. 20.) All these were extinct, it appears, in the time of Moses; and hence the frequent comparative reference to the Anakim, who still existed in Canaan itself, near Hebron, being in fact the very people who had inspired the spies with so much dread thirty-nine years before.

The information we collect from all this is, that there were gigantic races of which only one (the Anakim) remained in the time of Moses, although *individuals* of the other races might still be found in his time, and even in that of David. Thus Og was the only survivor of the old Rephaim. There is no ground on which any one can fairly dispute the original existence of such races. In times when personal strength and prowess was more valued than it now is, it was natural that these gigantic families should abuse the power which they derived from the possession of these qualities in a pre-eminent degree; and it was as natural that, in consequence of such abuse, other races, of common mould, and numerically more powerful, should agree to extirpate them, as dangerous nuisances, from the earth. Accordingly, we are told, that the races which Moses names were extirpated by the sword, and not by any such change in the constitution of the world, and in the duration of man's life, as rendered their continuance impossible. But having been extirpated, there is good reason why we should not expect to see them revived. Yet we have physical evidence that the propagation of gigantic races is possible now, and might be rather common under more favouring social and moral circumstances than now exist. Giants spring up now and then in our own times; and the experience derived from such isolated facts as have occurred, teaches that a gigantic pair will produce a gigantic progeny; but it is hardly to be expected that a gigantic race should be kept up where one of the parents only is a giant. But, in fact, there are races above the ordinary stature. Although the stature of the Patagonians has been very unsparingly cut down, the fact still remains that their general stature is equivalent to our tall stature; and that a people whose general stature is not more than equal to our tall stature, will insensibly seem to us a race of giants, is evinced by the exaggerated reports which were so long current concerning that remarkable race, derived from the testimony of different witnesses whose honesty and *intention* to convey accurate impressions there is no reason to doubt. In fact, the reports which the spies brought concerning the Anakim of Palestine, were not very different from those which were so long brought to us concerning the Patagonians: and if we had been left to judge merely from the impression which was made upon the spies, we should not, with this example before us, have cared to contend that the Anakim were taller than the Patagonians.

But we are not left to conjecture about the size of the Scriptural giants. We are told that the bedstead of Og, king of Bashan, was of iron, on account of the vast bulk it had to sustain; and that this bedstead measured nine cubits by four, "after the cubit of a man," that is the natural cubit of eighteen inches. Now Maimonides, in reference to this, observes that we are to understand a bedstead to have been one-third longer than the man for whose use it was destined. This proportion would bring down his stature to little more than nine feet. And the correctness of this estimate is corroborated by the fact that this was also just the stature of Goliah, another giant of one of these ancient races, whose height was "six cubits (nine feet) and a span." This is a stature which no one will call incredible or unlikely who remembers the numerous and most authentic instances which might be produced, and which are probably familiar to most of our readers, of giants, some not below, and others not much below, this stature. This modest stature of the ancient Scriptural giants may be most advantageously contrasted with the monstrous creations which figure in the early history and song of almost all other nations; and is the more worthy of remark, as the Jews, when left to themselves, had a truly Oriental taste and talent for the manufacture of giants. For proof of this, proceed to the following note.

* Gen. xiv. 5.

(²) OG, KING OF BASHAN, p. 319.—Now that we have, in the preceding note, stated what we believe to be the correct view of the general subject, we may allow ourselves to give our readers a sample of the sort of giants which the *unrestrained* Jewish imagination would have been capable of producing, and, indeed, has actually produced.

The Scriptural statement that Og was the last of the race of the Rephaim mentioned in the history of Abraham, the ingenious Rabbins have interpreted to mean that he was the sole survivor of the *antediluvian* giants; or, in other words, that he alone survived the deluge, and lived down to the time of Moses; others, however, allege that Sihon, king of the Amorites, whom they believe to have been Og's brother, and a giant like him, was also saved. However, to begin at the beginning:—

The old giants calculated that they could easily prevent the threatened deluge by setting their feet upon "the fountains of the great deep," to prevent the bursting forth of the waters from below, and, *at the same time*, laying their outspread hands upon "the windows of heaven," to prevent the fall of waters from above. But when the time arrived, their opposition was easily overcome by the first burst of water being made so hot that they were compelled to withdraw their hands from "the windows of heaven," and their feet from "the fountain of the great deep." Og, however, had the luck to discover that the water was cool all around the ark, and he therefore remained close to it all the time the waters covered the face of the earth. This he could easily do, as the waters did not reach above his ancles; but sometimes he rode upon the top of the ark, or sometimes sat upon the beam under the ladder. As for his food, he managed to ingratiate himself with the people in the ark, and swore that if assisted he would be Noah's servant all his days; whereupon Noah made a hole in the side of the ark, through which he handed him out his daily food. But we shall have an inadequate notion of Noah's charity unless we understand that Og required for his daily support a thousand oxen, the same number of different kinds of game, and a thousand measures of water.

After this there is a hiatus of about a thousand years in the history of Og. He then comes before us as being in the service of Nimrod, who gave him, as a present, to Abraham, after the patriarch had been delivered from the fiery furnace.* Indeed it turns out that Og is no other than our old friend Eliezer, of Damascus. As Abraham's servant, he was circumcised; and although not without his faults, he rendered very valuable services to his master. And since he could not for these services be recompensed in the world to come, he received his reward in this, and became king of Bashan.

Several particulars are told of him while with Abraham. The following will suffice:—"The soles of his feet were forty miles long; and he hid Abraham * in the hollow of his hand. One time he trembled so exceedingly at a rebuke from Abraham that he shook a tooth out of his head. Abraham made himself a bedstead from this tooth, and ever after lay and slept thereon. Authorities, however, somewhat differ on this point, some alleging that he made an easy chair out of Og's tooth, and used that chair alone for his seat as long as he afterwards lived."†

This may suggest some idea of Og's size: but the truth is, that authorities do not agree in the ideas they suggest on this point. In the treatise called *Nidda*, the following passage occurs:—"We learn that Abba Shaul, or, if thou wilt, Rabbi Jochanan, hath said, 'I have been a grave-digger; and it did once happen to me that I pursued a roe, which at last fled into a shin-bone. I ran after it into the bone, and followed it for three miles; but I could not overtake it, neither could I see the end of the bone. Whereupon I returned, and was told that this was the shin-bone of Og, king of Bashan.'"

But we must hasten to his death, which we give on no less authority than the Chaldee paraphrase of Rabbi Jonathan:—"And it came to pass that the wicked Og saw the camp of the Israelites, which extended six miles in length. Then he said, 'I will create among this people all the distraction of war, to the end that they may not deal with me as they have dealt with Sihon.' Whereupon he went and plucked up a hill of six miles extent, and set the same upon his head, that he might cast it upon them. But presently God caused insects to come upon the hill, and they ate a hole therein just over the head of Og, so that his head became enclosed therein. And when he attempted to cast the hill from him, he could not do it; for his grinders and other teeth grew out [and were fastened in the sides of the hollow which enclosed his head], and his mouth moved this way and that. Then went Moses [being himself ten ells high, re-

* See p. 46 of this work.

* But it must be understood that the patriarch himself was no pigmy, he was of the size and stature of 74 men of later days, and ate as much as 74 such men would require for their subsistence. Even Moses, although the heroic stature had degenerated in his days, was not less than ten ells high.

† 'Jalkut Chadash,' ol. 40, col. 2, in Stehelin, i. 82.

member], took an axe ten ells in length, and jumped ten ells high, and struck him *on the ancle*, so that he fell down and died."

These monstrous accounts have their use in teaching us what sort of history and what kind of book the Jews, left to their own inventions, would be likely to have given to us. Left to themselves, they have given us the Talmud; while, as instruments of God, they have given us the Bible. The prodigious difference between these books might almost alone suffice to evince the difference of origin—that the Talmud is *their* book; the Bible, the book of God.

(3) Og's Bedstead, p. 319.—Some writers, orientalizing too readily without knowing the East, have concluded that there are and were no "bedsteads" in the East; and that, therefore, the word employed in the present instance *must* needs mean one of those *divans* or sofas which are placed along the sides of Oriental sitting-rooms. But, in the first place, there *are* bedsteads in the East, and probably were of old; and, in the next, a divan has relation only to the size of a room and not to the size of its occupant. To say, therefore, that Og's divan was thirteen feet long would have no meaning whatever as an indication of his stature. It would be very much like inferring the size of a householder from the size of his house. But men seldom have their beds or bedsteads in any great disproportion to their person, rarely very much longer, and never shorter. Few things, therefore, could be selected—apart from dress or armour—as a better indication of stature; and, consequently, we adhere to the more current interpretation.

Bedsteads such as that shown in the first engraving, at p. 313, were used in ancient Egypt, and are still common in the same country, as well as in Arabia, and other countries that afford the palm. It is made entirely from the mid-rib of the palm-frond; and from the nature of its construction, Og's bedstead seems to have been something of the kind. With boards and beams a bedstead might have been made as capable as one of iron of sustaining the vast weight of the king of Bashan; but if it was usual to make bedsteads of wooden bars in this manner, one made with bars of iron would be more suitable to bear a heavy burden; for although sufficiently strong for ordinary purposes, this sort of bedstead is liable to be loosened and distorted by a great weight. We have, however, introduced, as our alternative, another cut, representing another kind of bedstead, or couch, of wood, which is used chiefly in gardens and other open places. The thrones in some oriental nations are on the same principle as this, and of a similar shape.

(4) Balaam's Prophecy, p. 322. We may here notice a very famous passage in the prophecy of Balaam:—"I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh:—there shall come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the four corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth. And Edom shall be a possession. Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies; and Israel shall do valiantly. Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion, and shall destroy their remaining cities." Divines usually apply this prophecy to Christ; but this must arise from the attraction of the words "star" and "sceptre;" for the context is full of local indications and specific objects, none of which can be applied to Christ, but most of which, if not all of them, apply to David. The source of this interpretation is easily ascertained. It is, with many other of our notional errors, taken from the Jews. They applied this passage to the Messiah; and properly enough according to the *mistaken* notion they formed of his character, as a mighty hero who was to lead them on to victory against their enemies on every side, as David had done before. The work this sceptred chief was to do, David did; and the people against whom he was to act were all but extinct in the time of Christ, and have long been so entirely now. Indeed the Jews themselves saw the direct application of this prophecy to David to be so clear that many of their best commentators allow it must be referred to him, although only as a type of the Messiah.

(5) Relations to Neighbouring Nations, p. 326. As the relations of the Hebrews with some of the neighbouring nations were much affected by the transactions which have been related, the following statement on this subject may help to render subsequent circumstances more intelligible. A curious test of the degree of relative estimation in which the several nations were held, is afforded by the number of generations which were required to elapse before the descendants of persons belonging to these nations, who had joined themselves to the Israelites, could be regarded as Hebrews, and admitted to the full civil and religious privileges which belonged to that character.

The language of the law with respect to the Egyptians is kinder than might be expected. It seems to have been considered that the sacred obligations of the original and long-continued hospitality and kindness of the

Egyptians had not been cancelled by subsequent ill-treatment. A further reason may be found in the fact that the Egyptians and Jews had, to some extent, intermarried in Egypt, whereby it happened that a portion of the Hebrew host was composed of persons descended on one side from Egyptians.*

The law in respect to the Egyptians, therefore, was, "Thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian, because thou wast a sojourner in his land. The children that are begotten of them may, in the third generation, enter into the congregation of Jehovah."† This put the Egyptians on a level with the most favoured nation; for there was no other, saving the Edomites, equally privileged.

The EDOMITES are, indeed, mentioned together with the Egyptians, and in precisely the same terms. A disposition was manifested to regard the tribes allied to the Hebrews with as much distinguishing favour as consisted with the preclusion of social intercourse. The descendants neither of Lot nor Esau were to be molested; and as to the Edomites, their forbearance, and even kindness, while the Hebrew host marched along their eastern borders, seems to have been regarded as a sufficient atonement for their churlishness in refusing to let them pass through the mountains. Hence, war against them was forbidden, and they might be admitted, in the third generation, to the congregation of the Lord. But this implied a corresponding peaceableness on their part, and this condition they observed till the time of David; when their aggressions caused a war, in which they were overcome. From that time they cherished a secret hatred against the Israelites, which they failed not to manifest when occasion offered.

Although the MOABITES and AMMONITES did not go to open war with the Hebrews, their bitter malice and deep-laid plots for their ruin, which had been attended with such disastrous consequences, were remembered against them, and determined their position among the nations. They were never to be admitted into the congregation of the Lord; and although the Hebrews were not commanded to war with them, and, perhaps, the original prohibition was considered in force, they were ordered to take no interest in promoting the future prosperity of the descendants of Lot. However, we shall see that the latter took the first opportunity of commencing hostilities themselves against the Israelites, and sometimes distressed them greatly, but were, in the end, completely subdued by David, as Balaam had foretold.

No particular law was given concerning the MIDIANITES. The tribes which allied themselves with the Moabites against Israel were, as we have seen, destroyed or dispersed. But against the nation at large there was no decree of hereditary enmity; and those tribes which did not participate in the atrocious plot against the Hebrews, seem to have been included among the nations with whom political alliances might be formed. But in later times they acted in so hostile a manner that no permanent peace could be preserved with them.*

The AMALEKITES were, for the reasons already shown, put under a ban of utter extermination, to be executed as soon as the Israelites might find it in their power. The manner in which this was executed will, in due season, come under our notice. This was the only nation not settled in Canaan against which this doom was pronounced; but all the Canaanitish tribes were subjected to it. The principles which dictated this course towards the Canaanites are, however, too important, and belong too properly to the very substance of the history, to be disposed of in this place.

(6) HESHBON, p. 326.—The site of this ancient capital of the Amorites is still recognisable under the same name, about eight miles to the east of Jebel Attarous, or Mount Nebo. Here are the ruins of a considerable town, covering the sides of an insulated hill; but scarcely a single edifice remains entire. The view from the summit of the hill is very extensive, embracing the ruins of a vast number of towns, standing at short distances from one another, and the names of some of which bear strong resemblance to those which the Scripture assigns to places in this quarter.

(7) EDREI, p. 327.—This site is found, in the land of Bashan, at the distance of about twenty-five miles from the southern end of the Lake of Gennesareth. Ed-Draa, the present pronunciation, is quite identical with the name it anciently bore. This is a deserted place, seated in a deep valley. There are many buildings and constructions more or less ruined; but most of them appear to be of Moslem origin. The most conspicuous is a large rectangular building, in the middle of which there is a cistern. This seems to have been made with the materials of some more ancient, as the pillars, which are of the Ionic and Corinthian orders, promiscuously intermixed, are only one-third their original length. This building seems to have been at one time a Christian church, and afterwards a mosque. The ruins of this place cover, altogether, a

* See Lev. xxiv. 10. † Deut. xxiii. 7, 8.

* Judg. vi.—viii.

space of about two miles and a half in circumference.

We know not that the site of Ashtaroth-Karnaim has been ascertained, but it seems not to have been far from Edrei.

([8]) Population of Israel, p. 327.—A population which affords 600,000 men fit to bear arms, cannot well be estimated at less than 2,400,000; that is, to the 600,000 men we must allow an equal number of females, making 1,200,000; and then we must double that to include the males and females under twenty years of age, which are generally found to form about one-half of any population. There are circumstances which show that this estimate cannot be above the truth, and is very probably under.

So many objections have been started to this increase of the Hebrews in Egypt that some very sincere persons have been made willing to believe that, in some way or other, a cipher or two has been added, and would not be reluctant to read 60,000, or even 6,000, instead of 600,000; but they forget that the larger number is sustained throughout the narrative. Not only are there two enumerations, at intervals of thirty-nine years, supporting each other in their sums and particulars; but the losses which the Israelites sustained through the judgments of God were such as would have sufficed to ruin a less numerous people. As it is, the effect is naturally exhibited in decrease rather than an increase of the population at the second census.

We have already touched slightly on the subject and should not have returned to it here but for the sake of introducing the following extract from Jahn, by which it is made to appear that the assigned increase was possible, even without reference to that divine blessing through which their great increase in Egypt had been promised and foretold.

The increase of the Hebrews in 430 years from seventy persons to 603,550 males and upwards, of twenty years of age, besides 22,000 males of a month old and upwards among the Levites, has appeared to many incredible. The number of 600,000 men capable of bearing arms necessarily makes the whole number of people amount to 2,400,000. An anonymous writer in the 'Literarischen Anzeiger,' 1796, Oct. 4, § 311, has demonstrated that the Hebrews, in 430 years, *might* have increased from seventy persons to 977,280 males above twenty years old. He supposes that of those seventy persons who went down to Egypt, only forty remained alive after a space of twenty years, each one of whom had two sons. In like manner, at the close of every succeeding period of twenty years, he supposes one-fourth part of those who were alive at the commencement of that period to have died. Hence arises the following geometrical progression.

After twenty years, of the seventy there are forty living, each having two sons:—

		Consequently =	80
80	$\frac{3}{4}$	=	140
120	$\frac{3}{4}$	=	180
180	$\frac{3}{4}$	=	270

and so on.

Thus the first term of the progression is 80 $= a$

The denominator $\frac{3}{2}$ $= b$

The number of terms $\frac{430}{20}$ $= n$

Therefore the expression of the whole sum will be

$$\frac{a b^{n} - a}{b - 1}$$

Or—

$$\frac{80 \times \frac{3}{2}^{\frac{43}{2}} - 80}{\frac{3}{2} - 1} = \frac{80 \times 6109 - 80}{\frac{1}{2}} = 977,280$$

The date to which the history has now reached is

Of the world 3803

Before Christ 1608

BOOK III.

JOSHUA AND THE JUDGES.

CHAPTER I.

THE CONQUEST.



[Ancient Syrian Chief addressing the People.*]

After the death of Moses the Israelites remained encamped in the plains of Moab, with the river Jordan before them, prepared for, and expecting, the order for their advance into the land promised to their fathers.

This pause on the borders of that land affords us a very suitable opportunity of considering the grave questions—What claim had the Hebrews to the land they were about to invade with

* The costume is Egypto-Syrian—that is Egyptian, with such modifications as the Syrians appear to have given it in adopting it from the Egyptians It has been very carefully studied.

the intention to retain it for their own use?—what right had they to declare a war of utter extermination against nations who had never given them any cause of offence?

The answer which is now much relied upon is that of Michaelis, and, more lately, of Jahn. This answer alleges, that the Canaanites had appropriated to their own use the pasture-grounds occupied by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and expelled from their possessions those Hebrews who had occasionally visited Palestine during their residence in Egypt; and now the Israelites were about to recover, sword in hand, the lands, wells, and cisterns which the Canaanites had usurped. This is very ingenious, particularly in the attempt to show that the Israelites had, during their residence in Egypt, endeavoured to keep possession of the pasture-grounds in Canaan. But, from the passage referred to in proof of this,* it does not seem to us easy to gather this information; and the whole statement seems to us so hollow and insubstantial, that, in the persuasion our readers will at once see it to be so, we shall spare the room which its refutation would occupy, and merely observe that no such claim, if substantiated, would justify the avowed intention to exterminate the *original* inhabitants of the land,—who were there before Abraham came from beyond the Euphrates; and that the Hebrews themselves exhibit no anxiety about these pasture-grounds, of which so much is said; but tell us plainly that, intending to become an agricultural people, they wanted the cultivated lands, the fields, the vineyards, the towns of the Canaanites. Besides, those who were most in want of pasture-grounds had already secured them on the other side Jordan.

Dr. Hales takes still higher ground, which once seemed to us more stable than we are now inclined to regard it. He relies much upon an Armenian tradition recorded by Abulfaragi. This tradition states that Noah, before his death, divided the whole earth among his sons; and Dr. Hales thinks he can find allusions to such a partition in such passages as those referred to below.† According to this account, the land of Canaan was in the portion assigned to Shem; but we find it in the actual occupation of tribes descended from Ham; and from this it is argued that the Hebrews, as being descended from Shem, had a prior claim to the land, and were therefore perfectly justified in taking it, if in their power, from the nations by which it had been usurped.

Now, however desirable it might be to find some such ground to stand upon, we fear that it will not be found possible, on close inspection, to stand with confidence on this. In the first place, it does not seem likely that Noah knew much of the world, or concerned himself about dividing the earth among his sons, when, as yet, his descendants were few in number, and remained in their original tents. Besides, an unsupported Armenian tradition is a very precarious authority to rest upon; and it is hard to find what support it receives from the Scriptural texts which have been adduced. And, if this original partition might be relied on, the Hebrews would have derived no particular claim to the land of Canaan from it,—that is, no better claim than any other of the many races descended from Shem might have produced. Taking all these things into account, together with the distance of time since the supposed assignment of the land, we may very safely conclude that no such claim was made by the Hebrews or apprehended by the Canaanites.

The want of solidity in both these explanations rather damages than assists the question they were intended to elucidate.

In this transaction there were, so to speak, two parties, God and the Hebrews. It occurs to us that a clearer view of it may be obtained if we consider,—first, the conduct of the Jews apart from their position as a peculiar people acting under the special directions of God; then to view the proceedings of God, apart from any connection with the Hebrews; and, lastly, show how the interests and objects of both parties concurred in the same course of proceeding.

We may then, for the moment, view the Hebrews as an army of oppressed people, escaped from Egypt, and seeking a country in which they might settle down as an agricultural nation; and whose leaders had it in view to keep up among them a particular system of religion and

* 1 Chron. vii. 20–29.

† Deut. xxxii. 7–9; Acts xvii. 26.

law, through which only the people could be prosperous and happy, and through which only one peculiar and grand object which they had in view could be accomplished.

This being their object, the direction which they did take was the only practicable one in which such a country as they sought could be found. The Nile and the Lybian deserts beyond cut off their retreat westward, as the Mediterranean did on the north, and a southern route would only have involved them deeper in the Egyptian territory. Now in this direction, which was the only one the liberated nation could take, Canaan was the only country which suited their purpose. The Arabian deserts were of course not suited to become the permanent residence of a settled people ; and, consequently, during the forty years which they spent in those deserts, they were compelled to remain a nomade people, and to sustain the hardships and privations incident to that mode of life. The country of Seir, although, as being mountainous, desirable from its capabilities of defence, was not suited either for agriculture or pasturage, and was, besides, in the occupation of a nation closely related to themselves, and whom they had no desire to molest. The country east of the Jordan was less suitable for agriculture than pasturage, and it was too open, and wanted those natural borders and defences which were essential to a people destined to live apart among the nations. Part of it they did however take possession of for pastoral uses; but the remainder was in the occupation of the descendants of Lot, with whom the Hebrews had no desire to interfere.

The land of Canaan was in every way most suitable for them. The mountains and the sea, by which it was in every part enclosed, rendered it easy of defence against all invasion. It abounded in corn, oil, and fruits—in all productions and capabilities essential to settled life. Besides, this was the land which attached to itself all the memories capable of exciting the enthusiasm of such a people as the Hebrews. It was the cradle of their race. It was their historical land—the land in which their renowned forefathers fed their flocks for more than 200 years, and which was still the country of their fathers' sepulchres.

Such considerations would direct their attention to Canaan rather than to any other of the neighbouring countries. And, their attention being directed to it, let us consider first the Hebrews in their simple character, as ancient Asiatics who had no country, and felt that they must obtain one, and whom we would not expect to take any other course than other ancient Asiatics would take in similar circumstances. Now in those times the doctrines of international law, and of the balance of power were certainly in a very crude condition. If we were not very anxious to confine our statement within the narrowest possible limits, we could accumulate instances to show that long after this date no nation was considered entitled to hold its territories by any other right than that of being able to defend them. If one people desired the lands of another, the practical law was, "You have a right to our lands if you can take them ; but if you cannot we have the better right. You have a right to try, and we have a right to resist! Let success determine the right." Nor was such a law so injurious as it would be *now*. In the first place, the actual occupants had such advantages of defence as would suffice to protect them from merely vexatious aggressions; and, as then, for the most part, nations were divided into small independent princedoms, few great monarchies having been formed, the obstacles among them to a combination for any common object were so great, that established nations had little reason to fear invasion from any overwhelming force.

Under this system we are convinced that no one questioned the right of the Israelites to *try* to get possession of Palestine—not even the nations against whom they acted. Let it also be borne in mind that the Canaanites were very far from being a defenceless set of people, whom the Israelites had nothing to do but to treat as they pleased. They were, for the most part, a numerous, brave, and warlike people, with fortresses and walled towns, with cavalry and chariots of war; and that, so far was it from being an unequal match, that all the natural advantages were on the side of the Canaanites ; who had to encounter a not very highly disciplined multitude from the desert, encumbered with women, children, and flocks; and of whom not more than one-fourth were fit to take a part in warlike operations.

Thus much for the claim or right of the Israelites, if we place them on the same ground as that on which any other nation would at that time have stood in corresponding circumstances.

But the leaders of the invaders determined that the interests of the nation required that the prior inhabitants should be totally exterminated. We are not to inquire just now into the point of view in which such a resolution would be considered at the present day, seeing that the nation by which this resolution was formed was not a modern or a European people. The only question is, did policy require or recommend this course? For we may be sure of this, that, if any course were in ancient times judged advantageous to a nation, no considerations of humanity or abstract justice were allowed for one instant to weigh against its execution. And we are not now considering the Jews in any other light than as an ancient Asiatic nation. Even at this day it is avowed, as a doctrine of international law, that one nation in its dealings with others is not bound to seek any interests but its own. In ancient times this doctrine was carried out to the full and broad extent, that a nation in its dealings with others had a perfect right to remove, even by the sword, every interest that interfered with its own.

Now the leader of the Hebrews, deeming the objects which we have indicated to be essential to the existence and well-being of the nation, was convinced that these objects could not be accomplished unless the Canaanites were entirely extirpated. He knew that the system which he sought to establish could not be upheld, but in a field clear for its operation. He knew that the unsettled conquerors of a settled people generally adopt the ideas and manners of the people they have overcome: and the manners and ideas of the Canaanites were not only so opposed to, and subversive of, those which he desired his people to retain, as to render the co-inhabitation of the land, by the two races, certain ruin to the people for whom he was bound to care,—but were in themselves so very evil as to render that extirpation which policy required an act of divine and moral justice. Again, it was certain that if the old, conquered nations were allowed to remain inhabitants of the land, together with the conquerors, and that the land was able to sustain them both (which it certainly was not), they would cherish a very natural hatred against their conquerors, and such a desire of vengeance against them, as would render them watchful of all opportunities which might offer of rising against them, and that with all the advantage which might be derived from an intimate acquaintance with their numbers and resources. This, while it would keep the nation in a state of constant fretfulness and excitement, would prevent them from dispersing themselves abroad properly through the country, and of giving full and proper effect to the spirit of their institutions.

We are satisfied that, however unsatisfactory these reasons may now appear, they are such as would have determined any ancient Asiatic nation to the course which the Hebrews were commanded to take; and this, without these special reasons, operating in the case of the Hebrews, which we have purposely reserved.

Now, then, let us look to the part taken by God himself in this matter.

If we believe the Bible, we must believe that, anciently, it was a part of the Divine plan in the government of the world to visit guilty nations with sudden and overwhelming punishments, by which they were utterly destroyed. Let us think of the Deluge, and of the "cities of the plain." Now God constantly declares that the nations of Canaan were at this time as ripe for such a punishment as Sodom and Gomorrah had been. The patriarchs were repeatedly told by God that the Canaanites generally had not yet reached that point of wickedness as would make their extirpation necessary to prove the world to be subject to moral government: "their iniquity was not yet full." But it was full, as God foreknew that it would be, by the time the Hebrews arrived from Egypt; and then it pleased God to commission the sword of the Hebrews to execute his judgment upon the Canaanites, instead of giving that commission, as he had done in other cases, to the storm, the earthquake, the inundation, or the pestilence. Shall we then allow our minds to dwell so exclusively on the sentence of extermination, and be quite unmindful of the long-suffering of God, who withheld his judgments for centuries, till the measure of their iniquities was completed, and who, in the mean time, gave them repeated warnings, through which the doom which hung over them might have been averted?

Here, then, the policy of God and the supposed policy of the Hebrews meet; or rather the policy of God, as it respected both the Hebrews and the Canaanites, met in this one point—the

extirpation of the latter. While the Jews required a vacant country, the justice of God required that a country should be vacated for them. The course which, in cool abstract terms, would have been *good policy* for the Hebrews, but which would have been *savage conduct* in them,—that course was sanctioned, was made imperative, by the righteous and long-delayed judgment of God upon a guilty people. Their guilt has never been questioned. They had no public faith or honour, and consequently no treaties could be formed with them. Their morals were corrupt in the extreme. Incest was common; they practised fornication, and indulged unnatural lusts, *in honour of their gods*, upon whose altars human victims were also offered. There seems to have been a point beyond which the abominations of pagan idolatry were not allowed to proceed; and as the punishments which followed, when that limit was once passed, evinced that the gods which those nations so sedulously worshipped were unable to protect their adorers, they would thus, in their way, suggest that there was a power far above them? But after God had established his testimony in the world, first by the Mosaical, and afterwards by the Christian system, this mode of asserting his moral government appears to have been more rarely employed.

The Israelites, therefore, entered Canaan as the commissioned ministers of the Divine justice; and as such they were under a solemn obligation to take that course which was also most conducive to their own interests, but from which, if it had rested on that ground only, their humanity might have shrunk. It was, therefore, made an inviolable law to the Hebrews that they should enter into no connection with these people; that they should not make them tributary, nor even admit them as subjects or slaves; but should cut off unsparingly all who fell into their hands, and in this manner warn the others to flee from the land where JEHOVAH was king. The decree of extermination must be understood as implying that the Canaanites might leave the country in peace if they chose. It seems that many of them betook themselves to flight, and, embarking on board Phœnician vessels, sailed to Africa, and there planted colonies. All, or at least the greater part, might have taken this course to save their lives and treasures;* and although we do not think that the Israelites could enter into treaty with them as idolaters, there is no reason to question but that, if they had chosen to renounce their idols, and to have remained in the country well disposed towards the Hebrews, they might, according to a proper construction of the Law, have been spared. We do not mean that the Hebrews wished to win converts by the sword. That they never did; nor, until their latter days, were they anxious to introduce strangers into their body. But if any nation had been convinced that the God of the Hebrews was the true and only God, in consequence of the wonders which he had wrought for them, and the victories he enabled them to achieve, and the impotence of their own gods before him, that nation would doubtless have been spared. But they seem rather to have chosen to abide the event of a war with the invaders.

We pray, then, again, that it may be distinctly understood that, in a conflict between men and men, there was no advantage on the side of the Hebrews, but rather the reverse. Their invasion was an irruption of the strong against the weak; but an attempt to conquer, with equal arms, a well defended country, occupied by a numerous people of tried and well known valour. The Hebrews did not attempt to reduce the people of the Promised Land with smooth words, that they might oppress them afterwards; but openly avowed their intentions, and thereby exposed themselves to corresponding treatment from the enemy, should *they* prove successful. No objection can be made to the supernatural assistance afforded to the Hebrews by God; for in all these contests among ancient nations, the gods of the respective parties were understood to be deeply interested, and engaged to protect their worshippers, and to promote their views as far as they were able. And struck as the Canaanites were by the prodigies wrought by Jehovah, they looked to their gods for the same kind of assistance, and expected them to fight on their behalf against the God of the Hebrews. We have no right,

* The Jewish authorities allege that the alternatives of submission, flight, or battle, were offered by Joshua to the Canaanites. We do not believe that the Israelites were allowed to accept their submission—at the commencement of the war, at least. But whether the alternative of flight was offered to them or not, it was obviously open to them. Maimonides, indeed, goes so far as to allege that the Israelites never besieged or assaulted a city but on three sides, that the inhabitants might, if they pleased, escape at the fourth side.

therefore, to make a complaint for them which they did not make for themselves. They more probably, in the result of the contest, quarrelled with their own gods for their impotence or insufficient assistance, than objected to the assistance which Jehovah rendered to his people. This was the war theology of the ancient nations; and we meet with it at every turn, not only in the Bible, but in all ancient history.

The particular consequences which resulted from the neglect or obedience of the Hebrews to their commission, are involved in the historical statements to which we now proceed.

It was now about "the time of barley harvest," that is, about the vernal equinox, when the river Jordan is swollen, and overflows its banks, from the melting of the snows on Anti-Lebanon, Hermon, and the mountains of Syria. Trusting to the obstacle which the river at this time offered, the Canaanites were under no apprehension of immediate attack, although they well knew by this time that the Israelites intended to advance into the country, nothing less than the conquest of which they contemplated. The interval does not appear to have been applied to any purpose of preparation by the inhabitants. The number of small states, among which the land was parcelled out, probably offered a serious obstacle to any extensive and formidable combination for a common object,—at least until the danger should become more immediately pressing. However, those Canaanites who inhabited that quarter of the country, in which the Hebrew host now appeared, were filled with consternation,—not so much on account of the Israelites themselves, it would seem, as on account of their God,—that great and terrible God who had wrought such unheard-of wonders for them. The passage of the Red Sea, of which they had heard long before, from various quarters—perhaps, among others, from the Egyptians—had, from its grandeur and important results, made a profound impression upon them. And when they saw the people, thus wonderfully delivered and helped, appear on their borders, many of the Canaanites despaired entirely that any long-continued or effectual stand could be made against them. Joshua learned all this by two spies whom he had secretly sent over the river, and who had got into the city of Jericho, where they had been concealed in the house of a woman named Rahab. From her they received this information; and she added: "As soon as we had heard of these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man because of you: for Jehovah, your God, he is God in heaven above and in earth beneath."

At length the order came to pass the river. This order was delivered to Joshua, and was accompanied by a very solemn confirmation of his appointment as the chief destined to lead the chosen people to the conquest of the Promised Land. Success was assured to him:—"There shall not a man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life;"* but at the same time he was warned that this success depended upon his entire conformity to the form and spirit of the theocracy. "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein; for then shalt thou make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."† The authority of Joshua, who was at this time about eighty-four years of age, was recognised very cheerfully by the people; and indeed it may be said that his brilliant career was disturbed by none of those popular risings and discontents which had rendered the administration of Moses so laborious and difficult.

The overflowing Jordan was passed by a miracle analogous to that which occurred at the Red Sea. It took place on the tenth day of the first month, wanting only five days to complete forty years from the day the Israelites left Egypt on the fifteenth day of the first month.

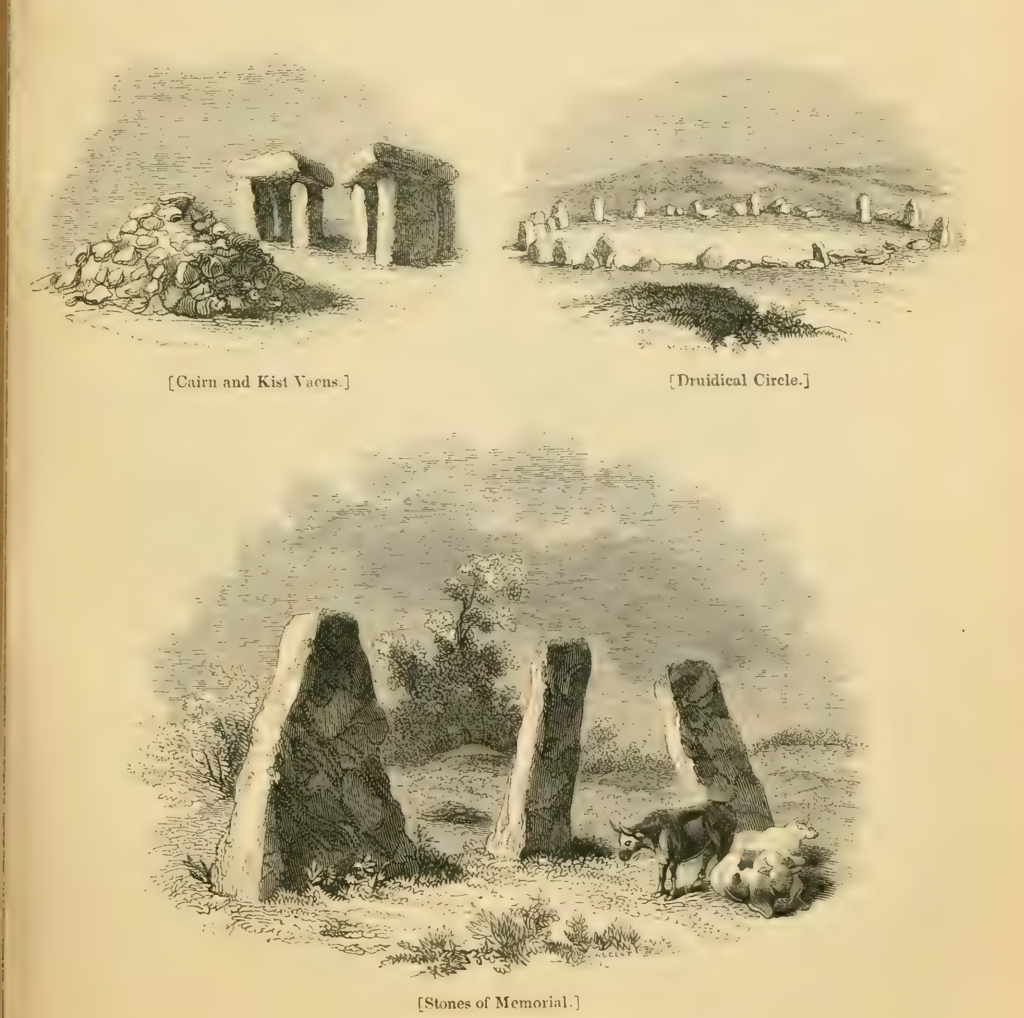
On that day the ark of the covenant, by the Divine direction, was borne by the priests before the body of the people on their march, about 2,000 cubits, or 1000 yards. As soon as the feet of these priests touched the brim of the waters of the river, the waters immediately recoiled upwards, stood, as it were, in heaps, and went backwards a considerable way, while the lower waters pursued their course to the Dead Sea, leaving their channel dry. Then the priests bearing the ark entered the bed of the river, and stood still when they had reached the

* Josh. i. 5. † Josh. i. 8.

middle, while the people passed hastily below them, at the distance of 2000 cubits. The ark, with the priests standing, as it were, to protect them from the fear and danger of being overwhelmed by the incumbent mass of waters. As soon as the people had all passed over, then the priests also proceeded to the further bank with the ark; and no sooner did the soles of their feet touch the dry land, than the suspended waters were loosened, and returned to their place, overflowing the banks as usual.

" The passage of this deep and rapid, though not wide river," observes Dr. Hales, " at the most unfavourable season was more manifestly miraculous, if possible, than that of the Red Sea; because here was no natural agency whatever employed; no mighty wind to sweep a passage, as in the former case; no reflux of the tide, on which minute philosophers might fasten to depreciate the miracle. It seems, therefore, to have been providentially designed to silence cavils respecting the former; and it was done at noon-day, in the face of the sun, and in the presence, we may be sure, of the neighbouring inhabitants, and struck terror into the kings of the Canaanites and Amorites westward of the river."

As an enduring record of this memorable event to the latest posterity, Joshua was commanded to erect two monuments, one in the bed of the river, before the waters returned, formed of twelve stones, one for each tribe, taken from the shore; and the other composed of the same number of stones, upon the bank, near Gilgal. The mention of these monuments,



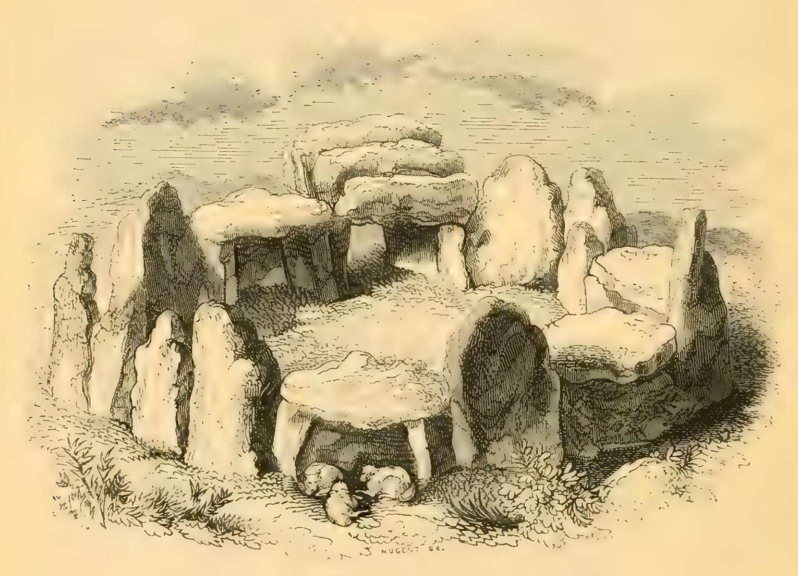
[Cairn and Kist Vaens.]

[Druidical Circle.]

[Stones of Memorial.]



[Cromlech at Plas Newydd.]



[Druidical Circle.—Jersey.]

and others of the same kind elsewhere, suggests whether they may not have offered some analogy to the various remains called Druidical, which are now found in Syria and in all parts of the world. We here introduce cuts showing the different forms of these monuments, but reserve for a note, at the end of the chapter, ([1]) the remarks we have to offer on the subject they are designed to illustrate.

The first encampment of the Israelites in the Land of Promise was at Gilgal, close by the monument they had thus erected, in the plain of Jericho. Here, the day after the passage of the Jordan, the rite of circumcision, which had been intermitted since the departure from

Egypt, was, by the Divine command, renewed; and the ceremony was performed on all the descendants of the generation that perished in the wilderness. They were then qualified to celebrate the passover, which also had been intermitted from the second time of its celebration at Sinai. The first passover in the land of their inheritance was accordingly celebrated on the fourteenth day of the same month. Some writers have censured the Israelites for not taking advantage of the panic of the Canaanites at the miraculous passage of the Jordan, but allowing them time to recover themselves, and prepare for war; but such objectors forget that these acts of obedience to the law formed, under their theocratical government, the best possible preparation for the enterprise that lay before them. It would, in fact, be wrong to overlook the signal act of faith involved in their submission to the painful operation of circumcision in the face of their enemies, relying upon the Divine protection till they were healed. This seems to intimate that the recent events had made a very salutary impression upon them.

As God never worked miracles that were unnecessary, or longer than they were necessary, the miraculous supply of manna, which had formed their chief subsistence for forty years, ceased the day after this third celebration of the passover; for they were now able to obtain a sufficient supply of man's ordinary food from the products of the land which they had now entered.

It was clear that their first military operations must be against Jericho—"the city of palm-trees,"—which appears to have been at that time one of the most important and strongest cities of Palestine. Joshua was accordingly surveying it one day, about this time; and, as the art of taking fortified places was then in its infancy, he was perhaps giving way to despondency at the apparently impregnable character of the place, when he suddenly saw before him a warrior with a drawn sword in his hand. The undaunted Hebrew challenged him, "Art thou for us or for our adversaries?" But on receiving the answer, "Nay, but as captain of Jehovah's host am I now come," accompanied by the same injunction which Moses had received from the burning bush in Horeb, "Loose thy sandal from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy," he became aware of the sacred character of the personage who appeared before him; and, humbling himself to the dust before him, he expressed his readiness to receive his commands. He was then instructed that the Lord had determined to strengthen the impression which had already been made upon the Canaanites, by causing the fall of Jericho before the Israelites, in such a manner as should demonstrate that One greater than the gods of Canaan fought for them.

According to these instructions, the whole host of Israel marched in solemn procession around the city, before the ark borne by the priests. From all that vast host not a sound was heard save the tramp of their innumerable feet, and the notes of the seven trumpets of rams' horns, which were sounded by as many priests attending the ark, and which must have drawn the attention of the wondering people, who thronged the walls of Jericho, to *that* as the principal object in the procession. This tour of the city was repeated, daily, for six days. But on the seventh day this circumambulation was repeated seven times; and when the seventh tour was completed, the silence which the Hebrews had hitherto observed was suddenly broken by one tremendous shout, which their united voices poured forth. At that sign the walls of Jericho fell level with the ground; and the triumphant, and now excited, host rushed from every side into the astonished city. Their first care was to place the hospitable Rahab and her family in a place of safety; and then the sword and fire were allowed to work their terrible mission without stint. Every creature that breathed in that city, of man or beast, was slain, and, after the prey, of metal only, had been collected, the place was set on fire, and levelled to the ground. In fact, the place had been devoted to total destruction by the vow of *cherem*, and was dealt with accordingly. And being thus an accursed, or devoted thing, Joshua, in the spirit of prophecy, denounced—what was held by the Jews the greatest of calamities—the loss of all his children, upon the person who should ever attempt to rebuild it. This happened accordingly to Hiel of Bethel, in the time of king Ahab.* In the case of a city devoted under this vow, nothing was preserved but the metal, and that was, as a conse-

* Compare Josh. vi. 26 with 1 Kings xvi. 34.

crated thing, delivered into the sacred treasury. It is interesting to learn that, not only silver and gold, but "utensils of brass *and iron*" were among the spoils of Jericho thus preserved and consecrated.

The miraculous overthrow of Jericho, and the terrible execution which had been inflicted on it, made upon the inhabitants of the land the profound impression which was intended. "The fame of Joshua was spread throughout all the country." But no combination was made against this formidable invasion. Considerable confidence might still be placed in those defences which, it must have seemed, the Israelites could not carry without the miraculous interposition of their God ; and every city, or, which was nearly equivalent, every small state, was left to defend itself as it best could.

Joshua proved himself a man eminently qualified for the duties which devolved upon him. Considering that now his immense camp required to be supplied with food from the natural resources of the land, he deemed it advisable that it should remain in that fruitful plain where it then lay, making it, in short, his head-quarters, from which suitable detachments might, as occasion offered, be sent upon military service. As soon, therefore, as the proper arrangements had been made in the camp, Joshua sent some spies to bring him an account of the city of Ai, which lay about ten or twelve miles. These men thought so lightly of the place, that they advised him to send only a small force against it. He accordingly sent 3000 men. This force received from the men of Ai a most unexpected and discouraging repulse, with the loss of thirty-six men. This was a heavy blow, from the encouragement it was calculated to offer the Canaanites by teaching them that notwithstanding the protection of their mighty God, the Israelites were not absolutely invulnerable. Joshua was so sensible of this, that he applied to God (probably by *urim* and *thummim*) to learn the reason of this reverse, after the general promise of victory to the Hebrews. The answer was, that a sacrilege had been committed, by some of the devoted things of Jericho having been secreted, and that Israel could not prosper until the abomination was purged from out the camp. Joshua, therefore, took immediate measures for detecting the criminal, who, when taken by lot,(2) proved to be one Achar, of the tribe of Judah. He confessed that from the spoils of Jericho he had secreted, for his own use, a handsome mantle of Babylonish manufacture, two hundred shekels of silver, and an ingot of gold, weighing fifty shekels, and that they remained hid in the earth within his tent. By this, Achar, according to the old laws and usages of devotement, had brought upon himself and all that belonged to him the terrible doom of *cherem* under which Jericho itself had perished. He, therefore, with all his family, his cattle, and his goods, together with the things by which his covetous heart had been tempted from a most sacred obligation, were taken to a valley outside the camp, where all that lived were stoned to death, and their bodies, together with the goods, consumed by fire ; after which a large cairn, or mound of stones, was raised by the people over the ashes, as a monument of this awful execution to future times.

After this, Joshua in person undertook a new expedition against Ai. He took 30,000 men with him, and resorted to a stratagem which seems to have subsequently become a favourite one with the Israelites, as it was afterwards among other nations. He placed 25,000 of his men in ambush behind the city; and with the remaining 5000 advanced openly to the assault. The people of Ai, encouraged by their former success, went out to meet them; on which the Israelites retreated, and the people of Ai, thinking they fled before them, as on the former occasion, pursued them with considerable ardour. When the defenders of the city were thus withdrawn to a considerable distance, the larger body which had lain in ambush, rose, and entered the town without the least resistance. They set it on fire; and when the retreating Israelites beheld the signal of the ascending smoke and flames, they turned round upon their pursuers with such vigour, that they began to think of retreating to their strong city. But when they looked back and saw it in flames, they were filled with consternation, and still more, when they beheld the main body of the Israelites advance forth from the city against them. Thus hemmed in between two forces, the late pursuers were filled with consternation, and made but an impotent resistance. They were all destroyed, with the exception of the king, who was taken alive. The united force then returned to Ai; and the fate of that town

was even as the fate of Jericho had been. The number of the Canaanites that perished that day was 12,000, being, in fact, the whole population of the place. The captive king was slain, and his body hanged upon a tree till even-tide, when, according to the Jewish law,* it was taken down. It was then buried in one of the gates of the town—or rather, a large heap of stones was raised over it there. No one can deny that this was a most revolting act. All that can be said in its justification, is involved in the considerations which we had occasion to state at the commencement of this chapter. To put him to death was a sacred duty to the Hebrews; and apart from that, of which we have already sufficiently treated, the *manner* of his death only is open to objection; and that, it will be observed, although ignominious, was by no means cruel. But, in fact, it were easy to show that even in wars which are not of an unusually savage character, or which were not wars of extermination, it was customary to take the chiefs prisoners if possible, for the purpose of subjecting them to a public execution, not merely to punish them, but to intimidate others by the terror of the example. History is full of this—the history of all nations. In the East the practice is not yet extinct; and the execution of the king of Ai will bear no comparison with the decapitation of Saoud, the Wahabee chief, at Constantinople, when we consider the distance of time and place, and the encouraging assurances which that unfortunate personage had received.† In this, then, it appears that the worst that can be said is, that the Hebrews were not superior to other nations of those and long subsequent times. And certainly we are not disposed to contend that they were superior in anything, and are willing to allow they were inferior in many things—*except in their religious system*—to the nations around them. These observations must be extended in their application to any incidents of a similar kind which may hereafter occur.

This second victory at last roused the Canaanites from the stupor into which they had lain; and the too sure presentiment of the fate which awaited them, unless energetic measures were taken, led them to take measures for repairing the errors into which they had fallen at the first, by combining to resist the storm which threatened to desolate the land. A general league was therefore formed by the princes of the numerous small states of different races, by which the southern part of Palestine was occupied. The republic (for such it seems to have been) of Gibeon, was nearly in the centre of this coalition, and was composed of the city so called, with three others, in the occupation of a tribe of Hivites. As Gibeon was but eight miles south by west from Ai, it might fairly expect to receive the first brunt of the approaching war. The inhabitants were much alarmed at this prospect, and greatly doubted the result. They deemed it far better to allay than to defy the approaching storm. But they knew that the Hebrews would enter into no alliance with the inhabitants of the country. They therefore resorted to a very singular stratagem to achieve their object.

The ambassadors whom they sent to the Hebrew camp assumed the exhausted appearance and travel-worn attire of men who had arrived after a long journey, and presented themselves before Joshua as the envoys of a far-distant people, who, hearing, even in their remote seats, the wonders which God had wrought for his people, had sent the present messengers to congratulate them, and to seek the friendship and alliance of a nation so highly favoured. The suspicions which the people at first seemed disposed to entertain were lulled by the delicate and skilful flattery which the statement of the strangers involved; and all doubt was removed when the men appealed to their dry and mouldy bread, which they declared was hot from the oven when they left their homes; and to the rent skins which contained their wine; their worn and travel-stained clothes and sandals,—all of which they vowed to have been new when they commenced their journey. By this Joshua himself was deceived; and he made a peace and alliance with them, confirmed by the oaths of "the princes of the congregation." The issue, however, impressed upon them the necessity of seeking the counsel of their divine King before they concluded such important engagements in time to come: for three days had not passed before they discovered that these pretended strangers, with whom they had formed this anomalous treaty, were their near neighbours the Gibeonites. However, out of regard to the

* Deut. xxi. 23.

† He was paraded over the city for three days before his execution.

oaths which had been taken, and notwithstanding the guile which had been practised, it was determined to exempt them from the general doom of the Canaanites; while, to punish their deceit, they were reduced to a kind of bondage, it being made obligatory upon them to supply a sufficient number of men to discharge the laborious offices of drawing water and hewing wood for the camp and the tabernacle.* This afforded to the faithless Canaanites a memorable example of a regard for treaties, and for the sacred sanction of an oath; while the services imposed upon the Gibeonites rendered a most acceptable relief to the persons by whom those offices had hitherto been performed. This service of the Gibeonites became easier to them when the Israelites were settled and dispersed in the land of promise; for they had then no longer to hew wood and draw water for the whole camp, but only for the tabernacle, and for the temple afterwards.

This defection of the Gibeonites from the common cause greatly increased the embarrassments of the princes of southern Canaan, as the state of Gibeon seems to have been one of the most important of the several small states in that part of the country. Considering this in connection with the unrestrained progress which the Hebrews had hitherto made, the king of Jerusalem, by name Adoni-zedek, who seems to have been the head of the league which had been formed, saw that the time for action was fully come; and it was judged best to commence with the comparatively easy task of punishing the Gibeonites for their discouraging defection. Accordingly, this king, with four allied or tributary princes, laid siege to the important city of Gibeon. It seems that all the kings who joined Adoni-zedek on this occasion were Amorites, and that tribe or nation may be supposed to have been animated by more than the general dread and hatred of the Hebrews, on account of the destruction of the kindred state which Sihon had ruled, on the other side Jordan. The Gibeonites being greatly alarmed, sent to Joshua to invoke his assistance, in virtue of the covenant which had been formed with them. He instantly complied. Taking a strong force with him, a rapid night march brought him suddenly upon the Amorites, who were defeated with great slaughter. Those that fled by the way of Bethoran he pursued to Azekah, and to Makkedah.† On the pursuit to the former of these places the Lord thought fit to demonstrate, as usual, that a Superior Power fought for Israel, by causing a tremendous shower of great stones, (3) whereby far greater numbers of the Canaanites were destroyed than by the sword of the Hebrews. Thus persecuted from the heavens above, and pressed by the Israelites in the rear, the survivors dispersed themselves, and continued their flight in different directions; and, probably, under the shelter of the advancing night, would have escaped to their fortified places, had it not pleased God to prolong the light of day, that the Israelites might see to overtake and to destroy the fugitives. No sooner did Joshua regret the approaching night, and reflect that a continuance of daylight alone was wanting to complete his victory, than he received within himself the assurance that God could and would grant even such a favour; and, therefore, under that impulse, and admirably exemplifying that faith which believes that nothing is too hard for the Lord, he cried aloud, " Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon: and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon." And, accordingly, the sacred narrative tells us, "The sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down for about a whole day. And there was no day like that, before it or after it, that Jehovah hearkened unto the voice of a man: *for Jehovah fought for Israel.*" That the sun and the moon stood still no one now supposes. The effect required might be produced without to that extent deranging the system of the universe. The system of astronomy then, and until within a recent period, universally prevalent, taught that both the sun and the moon had a rotatory motion around the earth; and that the phenomena of day and night were caused by that motion, as in fact they *appear* to be. We do not read in the sacred text that God himself

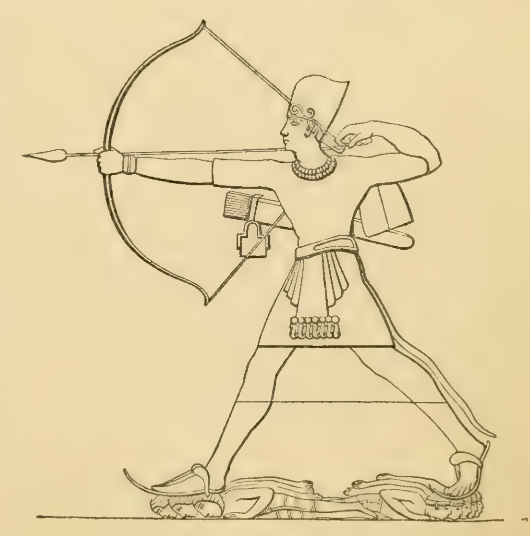
* See the cuts at p. 229.

† The relative position of these places was thus:—Bethoron (the Nether), twelve miles west by south from Gibeon; Azekah, eight miles south of Bethoron; and Makkedah, six miles south by east from Azekah; in all, about twenty-six miles; but the *direct* distance between Gibeon and *both* Azekah and Makkedah would have been little more than seventeen miles.

declared that the sun and moon stood still on this occasion. If we suppose that God intimated to the heart of Joshua that He would grant him a miraculous prolongation of the day, if his faith were of such strength as to ask for it publicly at the head of his army, we may conclude that Joshua would make that request in such terms as, according to his own conceptions, were proper to be employed in asking for such a miracle,—and this was, that the sun and moon might be arrested in their courses, which he thought alone adequate to produce the effect required,—or rather, which he thought must happen if the favour were granted which he was inspired to ask. God granted his request, and the day was prolonged as he desired. The historians of the times recorded the fact according to what appeared to them, and agreeably to what was then thought to be true astronomy; and, accordingly, the sun and moon appearing, and being deemed not for several hours to have moved forward in their courses, both the author of the book of Jasher, and Joshua himself, so record it in their several books. Although Joshua wrote his book under the direction of a divine assistance, we have no reason to conclude that God would interpose to prevent him from recording the fact in this manner. "If God had inspired Joshua to relate this fact in a manner more agreeable to true astronomy, *unless he had also inspired the world with a like astronomy to receive it*, it would rather have tended to raise among those who heard and read of it disputes and oppositions of science falsely so called, than have promoted the great ends of religion intended by it."*

That the day was prolonged, and that the apparent progress of the sun and moon was stayed, are the facts of this great miracle. *How* these effects were produced, is a question which has been largely discussed, and on which very various opinions have been entertained. It is our belief that no positive conclusion can be arrived at on this point; but as the alternatives of explanation are curious, and useful to know, they will be found in a supplementary note.(4) So signal a miracle, regarded *merely* as enabling the Hebrews to complete their victory, has seemed to many persons an uncalled for and disproportionate manifestation of divine power. But they should consider that nothing was better calculated than this to confirm the faith of the Hebrews, by demonstrating that the greatest of the heathen gods—the sun and moon—were His creatures, at his disposal, and under his control; while the same thing was exceedingly calculated to shake the confidence of the Canaanites in the gods to whom they looked for safety and deliverance, and to convince them that He who fought for the Hebrews was mightier than they. It was calculated to encourage the one party and to dishearten the other in nearly the same proportion.

To return to the history. The five kings who had escaped both the sword and the shower of stones, being now well satisfied that all was lost, betook themselves to the shelter of a cave near Makkedah, in which they hoped to remain undiscovered until the pursuers were withdrawn. But their retreat was detected, and information of it brought to Joshua, who ordered the mouth of the cave to be closed up with large stones until the military operations of the day were completed. Among these operations, Makkedah itself was taken, and Joshua made that place his present head-quarters, while parts of his force continued the pursuit of the fugitives. Some of them escaped to the fenced cities, but the greater part of them were



[Treading the conquered under feet.]

* Shuckford, book xii., where the whole subject is very ingeniously and ably discussed.

destroyed. When all the pursuers were returned to Makkedah, Joshua directed the five kings to be brought forth from the cave. They were thrown down before the congregation, and the chiefs placed their feet upon their necks, according to the old Oriental practice of military triumph, to which there are many allusions in Scripture, and which their respective sculptures indicate to have existed among the people of Egypt and of Persia. They were then slain, and their bodies hung upon trees until towards evening, when, according to the law, they were taken down. The corpses were then thrown again into the cave, which was closed up by large stones. This hanging upon a tree was a posthumous punishment of ignominy, as was the burning of the dead body; but the law prescribed no punishment which rendered the living ignominous. The remarks which have been made upon the execution of the king of Ai apply equally to the present instance, which therefore calls for no further remark.

Joshua, with the diligence of an able commander, availed himself of the panic which this signal victory was calculated to inspire, and overran the southern part of Palestine; and, no longer terrified at the sight of walled towns, the Hebrews took, in rapid succession, the cities of Libnah, Lachish, Eglon, Debir, and Hebron. The king of Gezer, named Horam, attempted, indeed, to raise the siege of Lachish, but was defeated and utterly destroyed with all his people.

In this short and very successful campaign, "Joshua smote all the people of the mountainous country of the south, and of the valleys and of the rising grounds, and all their kings: he left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as Jehovah the God of Israel had commanded."* He then returned to the general camp at Gilgal.

These last conquests of Joshua, which brought most of the southern parts of Canaan under the power of the Hebrews, fairly roused the princes of the north, who hitherto had watched the progress of the storm at a distance. Jabin, king of Hazor, took the lead in organising a most formidable league, whereby it was hoped that the Hebrew host might be crushed and overwhelmed at one blow. Not only the princes of Palestine Proper, but many high up among the mountains and valleys of Lebanon, and many from distant places beyond Jordan, were drawn into this grand alliance. The assembled host was compared to the sands upon the sea-shore for multitude. Profiting by their relations by land and sea with the Assyrians and Egyptians, some of the assembled nations had, after their example, a force in cavalry, in chariots of war, and offered a military aspect altogether new to the present race of Israelites and very formidable to them. They were at first alarmed; but, full of confidence in the words of their leader, who had always conducted them to victory, and now called them to new triumphs, they followed with the utmost alacrity and ardour to what threatened to be the most formidable conflict in which they had yet been engaged. The rendezvous of the allies was at "the waters of Merom," probably the lake Semochonitis, where they remained to organise their forces, and arrange the plan of the campaign: and here they lay, when Joshua, according to his usual tactics, having penetrated to Upper Galilee by rapid marches, fell suddenly upon them by surprise: taking his position so as to shut up their cavalry, and deprive their chariots of all scope for action, he carried terror and death into their ranks, and threw them into disorder. The carnage among the allies was horrible, and the route complete. The great body of those who escaped the first edge of the sword fled towards Sidon, westward, while another stream of fugitives hastened eastward, towards Mizpeh, but they were in every direction so closely pursued that most of them fell by the way. Jabin himself escaped for the present to his own city of Hazor.

Joshua being now master of the immense spoils of the league, might have thought of employing against the remaining enemies the chariots and horses which had fallen into his hands. But faithful in his obedience to all the commands of Jehovah, he burned all the chariots, and all the horses had been in the first instance ham-strung by his orders. Joshua had received a special command to act thus; but even without it, the injunctions of the law against a force in cavalry and chariots, would probably have determined his conduct. The reasons for this

* Josh. x. 40.

are easy to find. Horses were only used in those early ages for war or parade, and were of comparatively little use in a mountainous country like Palestine. For riding and burden, asses, mules, and camels were preferred, and oxen for draught. And then so much importance was attached to the use of horses and chariots in war, that the possession of them was likely to tempt the Israelites to foreign wars, in opposition to the Divine intention to keep them separate from the nations in a compact territory.

Joshua then hastened against the metropolitan city of Hazor, in which king Jabin had taken refuge. It was reckoned the chief of all the cities belonging to the confederated kings; and when taken, the inhabitants were all cut off, and the town itself burnt to the ground. This was the only one of the cities *standing on hills* * which Joshua destroyed. The rest were preserved for the occupation of the Israelites, who took all the property they found on them for spoil. The men of all these cities were put to the sword; but it will be recollected that the towns were all taken by assault, and that the inhabitant males of these cities were their offenders. It appears such towns in the plains and valleys as fell into the hands of the Israelites were destroyed. The reason for this distinction is obvious. Seeing that so large a number of the men were required in general military operations, it was impossible for the Hebrews to occupy and defend all the towns which they took. They, therefore, retained only those which from their situation on the hills were the strongest and most easily defended; and destroyed those in the plains which were the most exposed and the most difficult to defend.

This and the former signal victories, connected as some of them are with manifest intimation that the Israelites were favoured by a Power which had no limit or control, so intimidated some of the Canaanites, that they appear to have left the country in search of new and more peaceful habitations. Some appear to have withdrawn into and beyond the northern mountains; while others might find in the ships of their unmolested kindred, the Phœnicians, easy access to the remoter shores of the Mediterranean. Bochart and others have taken much pains to trace the fugitives in Asia and Africa. They seem to have been most successful in finding traces of nations or tribes of Canaanitish origin in the northern coasts of Africa. The Jews themselves have old traditions to this effect. The thing is indeed highly probable in itself, and is well supported by the corroborative circumstances which such writers have adduced; and this even without laying undue stress on the testimony of Procopius (living in the time of the Emperor Justinian), who, in his history of the Vandals, reports that in Mauritania Tingitana there was an inscription upon certain pillars, purporting that "the inhabitants of the country had fled thither from the face of the robber Joshua, the son of Nun." The Scripture itself is silent in these matters, save that it incidentally transpires† that two Amoritish nations were "driven out" by "the hornet," which may be supposed to be the formidable insect which Bruce describes under the Arabic name of *Zimb*. No one who knows the East doubts the power of an insect-plague to drive a people from one country to another; and there are Greek and Latin traditions, traced with learned ingenuity by Dr. Hales, which describe nations thus expelled from their native seats in the east, and seeking a refuge in the west. The vindictive power that was supposed to preside over this dreadful scourge came to be worshipped at Ekron, in Philistia, through fear, the reigning motive of pagan superstition, under the name of *Baalzebub*, or "Lord of the hornet."

The victories which we have recorded gave the Hebrews a predominant power both in the north and south of the country; nor was there, in the time of Joshua, any spirit or power in the remaining Canaanites to form any new combination against the invaders. A long and desultory warfare therefore ensued against the petty princes who occupied the unconquered portions of the country, a great number of whom were subdued in detail, and their strong cities taken by force of arms; for it does not appear that any one town was surrendered

* This is doubtless the true meaning (and so the Samaritan and Vulgate understand it) of what our version renders by "stood till in their strength," a phrase which conveys no particular meaning.

† Josh. xxiv. 12. This had been foretold in Exod. xxiii. 28, and Deut. vii. 20; and as terms there employed seem more extensive, probably there were more than the two instances which are incidentally noticed.

without fighting, besides the cities which belonged to the Gibeonites. The manner in which this information is conveyed in the Book of Joshua* clearly intimates that although it was not the Divine *intention* that the Canaanites should be spared to remain mixed with the Hebrews in the land which the latter were destined to occupy, yet that *if*, at least hypothetically, any city *had* submitted peaceably, from the conviction that the God who fought for the Hebrews was greater than all gods, and One whose power it was useless to resist, they would have been spared. But as it is, if we could overlook the peculiar circumstances, and forget the infatuation which prevented them from receiving those convictions which the prodigies wrought by Jehovah seem calculated to have inspired, it would be impossible to withhold our praise and sympathy for the spirit and courage with which they contended even to the last—even to the death—for the possession of the homes and hearths they had received from their fathers.

It was not a part of the Divine intention that the Canaanites should be expelled all at once. It had, many years before, been announced by Moses, that they would be driven out gradually before the Hebrews.† The principal reasons given for this was lest the land, being comparatively depopulated, "the beasts of the earth" should multiply to the prejudice of the new occupants. This implies much more than it expresses. It shows that while the Israelites were in the first instance assisted, by potent miracles, to win great and comprehensive victories, thereby to gain a firm footing and a predominant power in the land, it was determined that they should pass by natural and progressive steps into and through their transition state as a nation. The small and disunited nations of Canaan, were thus gradually to yield to the expulsive action of a united and increasing people, in the same proportion in which the wants of that people were developed. But besides this leading reason, that the Hebrews were only to get as much of the country as their numbers enabled them to occupy and defend, two others of much importance are also alleged. One of these, that by having enemies left in the country, against whom the necessities of their position would compel them constantly to act, they might be properly trained to war and military service, of which they formerly knew little or nothing,‡ but which was necessary in those ages to enable them to maintain themselves in the country they were to receive. The other, that by having among them a people of different habits and religion, their obedience to the system of doctrine and policy which they had been taught, might be sufficiently tried and exercised.§

At the end of five years, from the passage of the Jordan, the results of the war were, that thirty-one of the petty kings of Canaan had been defeated and dispossessed of their dominions. Among the natives extirpated or expelled were the gigantic Anakim in and about Hebron, whom there has been such frequent occasion to mention. Some of them sought a refuge in the country of the Philistines, where their descendants are found a long while after. But others appear to have returned, probably while the attention of Joshua was engaged by the affairs of the north, and re-established themselves in parts of their ancient seats, from which they were ultimately expelled by Caleb.

In the sixth year it seemed that, as compared with the allotment of territory to the two tribes and a half beyond Jordan, sufficient to provide for three tribes more on the same liberal scale had been obtained. To recognise that God was the sovereign proprietor of the soil, and had the entire right to its disposal, his decision was appealed to by a solemn lot, to determine the particular tribes to which his first distribution of territory in the promised land should be assigned. By this course all jealousies were prevented which might have arisen, had the distribution been made by Joshua, or any other person, or body of persons, on their own authority. The lot consigned this territory to Judah, Ephraim, and the unprovided half tribe of Manasseh. The distinct manner in which the first provision was thus made for the very tribes which had received from Jacob the birthright and the double portion, while it served to intimate to the other tribes that the lot had not been fortuitously determined, must also have contributed in a considerable

* There was not a city that made peace with the Israelites, save the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon; all other they took in battle. For it was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, *and that they might have no favour*, but that he might destroy them, as the Lord commanded Moses." Josh. xi. 19, 20.

† Exod. xxiii. 28—30. ‡ Judges, iii. 1, 2. § Josh. xxiii. 11, &c.

degree to give a further sanction to the superiority which the tribes of Judah and Ephraim had already begun to assume.

This first division of lands took place in the year before Christ 1602. It is not usually in histories distinguished from what was really the second and final distribution; but a careful view of the account of this matter which the Book of Joshua contains, will show that the distinction ought to be made; and that the final distribution to the seven remaining tribes did not take place till some years after that by which provision was made for Judah, Ephraim, and the half tribe of Manasseh.

Before the internal distribution to particular families was made of the territories thus allotted, the aged Caleb presented himself before the assembly, and reminded it that, besides the prolonged days which had been granted to himself and Joshua when they contradicted the "evil report" which the other spies gave of the land they had traversed, Moses had also promised that the land in which he had beheld the gigantic Anakim should be given to him for a possession, "because he had wholly followed JEHOVAH his God." He thankfully acknowledged that the Lord had, according to his promise, kept him alive for forty-five years, while the generation to which he belonged had perished: and that now, although four score and five years old, he was as strong and as able for council or war as in that day when Moses sent him to explore the land of Canaan. And although the land promised to him was now again in the possession of Anakim, and the towns they held were very strong, he was confident that God would be with him, and enable him to drive them out, if the grant made by Moses were now confirmed. It was so; and he succeeded not only in expelling three chiefs of the Anakim who held possession of Hebron, but in getting into his hands the other strong town of Debir, which was upon the lands assigned to him. A circumstance connected with the taking of the latter place illustrates some of the customs of the time. Caleb caused it to be publicly known that he would give his daughter Achsah in marriage to whosoever should take this place for him. This enterprise was undertaken by Othniel, the son of Caleb's brother, and who, in fact, had by custom the best right to the hand of his cousin, and who would have incurred some disgrace if he had allowed her to be won *in this way* by another. He succeeded, and received his reward. Hereafter we shall find Othniel's name among the judges of Israel. These customs—the absolute right of a father to dispose of his daughter, or to propose her as the reward of some perilous enterprise—still exist in the East, and we meet with them often in Arabian histories and tales.

The Ephraimites, to whose tribe Joshua belonged, seem to have considered that the promised and now granted provision for Caleb, implied the Divine intention that a similar provision should be made for Joshua himself, whose merits were as distinguished as those of Caleb on the same occasion, and whose services had since been very great. They therefore gave him the choice of his inheritance; and he selected the city of Timnath-serah, in Mount Ephraim, which he repaired, and ultimately made the place of his residence.

Another interesting circumstance arose in connection with the internal distribution of the territory allotted to the tribe of Judah. It seems that before the time of Moses, as long after, in most oriental nations, a female could not inherit land. If a man died, leaving daughters only, his property descended to his brother, or the children of his brother, overpassing the daughters. The propriety of this and other laws of landed inheritance was never so likely to be questioned as by a people who had not hitherto possessed freehold properties, but had the prospect of such possessions immediately before them. Now there was a man of an eminent family in Manasseh, called Zelophehad, who died, leaving five daughters, but no son. While the Israelites were in the plains of Moab, and the laws of inheritance had already become a subject of immediate interest, these women applied to Moses, representing their case, and argued that if the inheritance which would have been the due of their father passed to another family, because he had no son, then that family would in fact become extinct—a very terrible calamity to an Israelite, and calculated greatly to depress the already low estimation in which daughters, as compared with sons, were held. Moses felt much difficulty in this question, and reserved it for the special directions of God. The response was, that if a man had no sons,

his daughters might inherit; that if he had neither sons nor daughters, the inheritance should devolve to his brethren and their heirs; but that if he had no brother, to the brothers of his father and their heirs: and, failing these, to the nearest of kin. This determination seems to have been much canvassed; and some difficulties appeared, which induced the family chiefs of that branch of Manasseh's tribe to which Zelophehad belonged, to apply to Moses, and to represent that females thus inheriting might perhaps marry into other tribes, and thus carry out of their own tribe a portion of its original property. Moses admitted the force of this objection, and decided that although such heiresses should be free to marry whoever they pleased, their choice should be limited to the tribe to which they belonged themselves. This determination was satisfactory to all parties, not excepting the daughters of Zelophehad; for they did more than was required of them, by marrying into the families into which the inheritance would have descended, had their own claims been overlooked.

Now, when the actual distribution of the allotted territory to the families of Manasseh took place, the daughters of Zelophehad appeared to claim the inheritance which devolved to them under this decision, and which they accordingly received.

It is impossible to estimate too highly the consequences of the law upon the position of the women among the Israelites. We know that the privileges to which any class of persons is *eligible* raises the condition and estimation of that class, even though it happen that only a few can receive the actual privileges which have this operation. On this rule, which, we think, is of universal application, it is impossible but that the eligibility of women to inherit landed estates must have had a most favourable influence upon their general condition. And we think the studious reader of the Bible will discover that women, among the Hebrews, were far more favourably considered, and allowed a more prominent and distinguished place in the social system *after* than before this law existed; and he will see cause to attribute to the operation of this same law the unquestionable fact, that the position of the women among the Hebrews was far more free and independent than in any country of the ancient East (Egypt perhaps excepted), or than in any country beyond Rome, after Rome came into existence: that it was more so than in the modern East is known to all. And we think it may not be going too far to affirm that the social rank which woman takes in all the countries of Christendom, as compared with countries which are not Christian, may very fairly be considered a remote result of this and some other laws, whereby Moses determined the social position which woman should occupy. And the social position of woman in any nation, is the least uncertain test of that nation's moral civilization.

The formal occupation, now taken of the conquered territory, suggested a suitable occasion for the removal of the tabernacle, from the outskirts of the country at Gilgal, where it had so long remained, to a station more central and therefore more convenient for the resort of the tribes now about to spread themselves over the conquered land. Shiloh, in Ephraim, nearly in the centre of that land, was chosen for the purpose. In the way thither, and while the Hebrew host still remained together, the opportunity was taken to obey the command of Moses respecting the renewal of the covenant with God on the mountains of Ebal and Gerizim.*

It is difficult for the mind of man to conceive a ceremonial more truly grand than that whereby the far-seeing Legislator had provided that the people should once more, before they took possession of their inheritance, declare their solemn acceptance of those institutions which had been given to them, and bindingly oblige them so to adhere to them. And if Moses, who was never himself in the promised land, had surveyed its whole extent, or the extent of the whole world, for a site most fitting for this great transaction, one could not have been found more appropriate than the twin mounts—the fair and fertile Gerizim and the blasted Ebal,

* We are aware that the solemn ceremony at Ebal and Gerizim is placed earlier in the Book of Joshua; but in some way or other it appears to have got out of its proper place, as the context shows. The order of the conquest of Canaan, as related in that book, makes it manifest that this ceremonial could not have taken place *sooner* than where we now place it. Geddes places it *later* still. But we consider that when some of the tribes were about to disperse to their new homes, and when the ark was about being removed to Shiloh, which was but ten miles from Shechem, was the most obvious and probable occasion.

A view of the mounts Ebal and Gerizim has been given in the Physical History, p. cxviii.

with the long, narrow, and beautiful valley by which they are separated. Here in the first instance were set up the largest ones, which being covered with plaster, after the Egyptian fashion, were written over "very plainly" with the principles of the law, that the people there assembled might be fully aware of that to which they were about to declare their obedience. Their sacrifices were offered upon a large altar, built upon Mount Ebal,* of unhewn stones, according to the law. The ark, attended by the priests, remained in the valley below, while on each side, up either mountain, stood the thousands of Israel, none being wanting, from the chiefs, the judges and the Levites, to the women, the children and the stranger. All were there. In that vast audience, six tribes, Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulon, Dan, and Naphtali, stood upon the barren Ebal, to pronounce the curses of the law upon the wrong-doer and the disobedient; and six, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin, upon the pleasant Gerizim, to pronounce its blessings upon the well-doer and the obedient. And as each clause of cursing or of blessing was pronounced, there rose, with one vast rushing voice from the living hills, the AMEN! "So be it!" by which that vast multitude declared their assent to the announced conditions.

After this (as we suppose) the congregation proceeded to Shiloh to set up the tabernacle, where it remained for above four hundred and fifty years.

The two tribes and a half, which had lately been provided for, then proceeded to establish themselves in the territories which had been assigned to them.

Of the history of the following five or six years we know but little. We have the most curiosity to know how the seven unprovided tribes disposed of themselves during this time. Most probably they remained in camp at Shiloh, around the tabernacle, as they did before at Gilgal. That some engaged in a desultory warfare with the unconquered states is scarcely questionable; but that the first vigour of this warfare had considerably relaxed, is evident from the reproach of Joshua to the seven tribes, "How long are ye slack to go to possess the land which the Lord, the God of your fathers, hath given you?" It seems then to have occurred to him that if the lands of the country were distributed in proper allotments to those tribes, without regard to their being conquered or unconquered, its own interests would induce each tribe to exert itself to gain possession of the territory which fell to it. It seemed that enough had been done by the nation at large; and that the rest might be left to the particular tribes which were to be benefited. It had also become desirable that the large draft of 40,000 men from the tribes beyond Jordan, who had hitherto taken part in the enterprises of their western brethren, should be allowed to return to their homes.

But some inconvenience had resulted on the former occasion from proportioning the parts without having surveyed the whole. It already appeared that the allotment of the tribe of Ephraim was not sufficient for its wants. This fact, by the bye, shows the perfect impartiality of the distribution, or, in other words, that it was really, as it professed to be, left to be Lord. For Ephraim was Joshua's own tribe, and therefore the one whom he might have been, of himself, the most inclined to favour. However, when the Ephraimites complained of their confined limits, they were permitted to subdue for their own use as much more neighbouring territory as they wanted, before the distribution to the other tribes took place. On the other hand, it appeared that the tribe of Judah had considerably more territory than it needed or could occupy, in consequence of which, when the actual extent of the whole country to be portioned out became better known, two of the smaller tribes, Simeon and Dan, received their shares out of the territory which had been at first assigned to Judah.

Such circumstances clearly pointed the advantage, if not necessity, of an actual survey of the whole country before the designed distribution to the unprovided tribes was made. Joshua therefore directed that each of the seven tribes should select three competent men, who should traverse the whole country, and make a survey of it, bringing back the results entered carefully in a book. It would be curious to know whether an attempt at mapping the surveyed districts formed any part of this undertaking. It is only stated that they were to

* The Samaritans would have it to be Gerizim.

" describe it in a book," without mention of the nature of the description, save that the land was described " by cities," and " in seven parts." At all events this is the first example of a topographical survey on record: and it shows that there must have been some knowledge of geometry among the Hebrews; and this had doubtless been acquired in Egypt.

Seven months were occupied in this survey. At the expiration of which the surveyors returned with the requisite information in their books. The lots were then taken before the Lord in Shiloh; and that He, the Supreme proprietor of the soil, did in fact regulate the resulting distribution must have appeared evident to all the tribes, by the circumstance that the portions thus assigned to them were, severally, in exact conformity with the descriptions which, two hundred and fifty years before, Jacob had, in his dying prophecy, given of the territory which each of his sons should inherit.

Seeing that we give, in 'The Physical History,' an extensive view of the whole country, we shall abstain from supplying in this place a particular account of the domains of the several tribes: and for the local situation, the boundaries, and the towns in each of them, a reference to a good map of the country will be more profitable to the reader than any quantity of written detail. It may suffice to mention that the *northern* portion of the country, in after times called Galilee, was divided among the four tribes of Naphtali, Zebulon, Issachar, and Asher. The *central* portion, afterwards called Samaria, was given to the house of Joseph, that is, to Ephraim and the unprovided half tribe of Manasseh. And the southern part, which in after-times formed the kingdom of Judah as distinct from that of Israel, was allotted to the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, Simeon, and Dan, the patrimony of the two latter being, as just intimated, taken out of that which had been wholly assigned to Judah.

Thus *twelve* tribes were provided for; as the tribe of Joseph was counted as two—Ephraim, Manasseh, and Levi were not counted at all. But the last-named tribe received from each of the others a certain number of cities, making forty-eight in all, each of them with a domain of between eight and nine hundred acres of land, for gardens and pasture-fields. Of these cities, the Kohathites received twenty-three, the Gershonites thirteen, and the Merarites twelve. Six of the forty-eight, three on each side Jordan, were appointed for cities of refuge, namely, Kadesh (in Galilee), Shechem, and Hebron, on the west; and Bezer, Ramoth-Gilead, and Golan, beyond the river. Thirteen of the forty-eight cities were also assigned to the priests as distinguished from the other Levites; and it strikingly illustrates the overruling providence which directed these matters, that the lot, by which all these arrangements were determined, fixed these cities near each other, and also near what, several centuries after, was, by the erection of the temple at Jerusalem, rendered the seat of their duties. Thus we see prospective arrangements made, in the secret providence of God, for a long subsequent event; and not only for *this* event, but probably with reference to the ultimate separation of the Hebrew kingdoms: for all these towns were in what finally became the kingdom of Judah.

This second and final division of territory took place in the year 1596 before Christ.

The time was now come when the 40,000 men of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, might be allowed to return to their own heritage beyond Jordan. In his farewell address to them, Joshua highly commended the fidelity with which they had fulfilled their engagement, in fighting with and for their unprovided brethren, after they had received their own inheritance; and he earnestly charged them to " Take heed to do all that Moses, the servant of Jehovah, charged you. To *love* Jehovah, your God, and to walk in all his ways, to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul." With his blessing they then took their departure, greatly enriched by their equal share in the spoil of the Canaanites, which, we are told, consisted of " very much cattle, with gold, silver, brass, iron, and very much raiment." This they were to divide with those who had remained at home to occupy and protect their own country.

The departing body was so full of good feeling, that when they had crossed the Jordan, and entered their own territories, they bethought them of erecting a great altar, as a monument to posterity of the real connection between the tribes which the river separated. This

transaction produced a strong sensation when the news of it was brought to Shiloh. The object of this procedure was entirely misunderstood. The altar was taken to be a monument of separation rather than of union. For as there could be but one altar for national worship, the erection of another altar beyond Jordan was judged to intimate an intention to form a separate establishment for worship in that country; which, even if at first intended for the honour of the true God, would certainly in the end lead to idolatry and disunion; and, while it might recognise Jehovah as GOD, would overlook those obligations by which all the Israelites were bound to render service to him as their KING. In short, the act, as viewed by the other tribes, was an overt act of rebellion, and, as such, they determined to punish it, unless a sufficient explanation could be obtained. The whole congregation assembled at Shiloh, ready to make war against the tribes beyond Jordan. But first they sent a deputation to expostulate with them, and to require an explanation. This deputation was suitable to the gravity of the occasion, consisting of Phineas, the son of the high-priest, and with him ten chiefs, one from each of the tribes west of the Jordan. On its arrival in Gilead, the deputation, assuming the fact to be as they supposed, proceeded to threaten the two and half tribes with punishment for their rebellion against Jehovah and the congregation. If they disliked the lands which they had received beyond the river, as being "unclean," or unhonoured with the presence of the tabernacle, or if they deemed it too hard for them to resort beyond the river to render the periodical service which the law required, then let them come and share with the other tribes in the country west of the river. The punishments which had befallen the whole congregation for the sin in the matter of Baal-peor and of Achar, were then mentioned for a warning.

The two and half tribes were much distressed at this imputation, and with much animation and eloquence repelled the charge, and explained that their object had been exactly to prevent the very alienation and separation of which they were accused of contemplating. After declaring this in general terms, they proceeded to explain their precise object more particularly, and we cite their words, because they very impressively intimate the general object of such erections. They had done it, "Lest your children might hereafter say unto our children, What have ye to do with JEHOVAH, the God of Israel, ye children of Reuben and Gad? For Jehovah hath made the Jordan a boundary between us and you; ye have no share in Jehovah. And so, your children might make our children cease from worshipping Jehovah. Therefore we said, Let us build ourselves an altar,—not for burnt offering, nor for sacrifice, but for A WITNESS between us and you, and our generations after us. . . . that your children may not say to our children in time to come, Ye have no part in JEHOVAH."*

An explanation so much in agreement with the spirit and object of the Mosaic institutions, gave great satisfaction to the ambassadors, and afterwards to the people who awaited the result at Shiloh. They blessed God, and dispersed to their several homes.

The tribes beyond Jordan gave the name of ED (the witness) to the monument they had erected, and which continued long after to bear its testimony to the unity of Israel.

Joshua appears to have survived about fourteen years after this, during which he lived for the most in his own city of Timnath-serah. During these years, the people, being now fairly established in the country, and finding that they had land enough for their present wants, do not seem to have been much engaged in war, in order to obtain possession of those parts of the country which still remained in the hands of the Canaanites. It is not unlikely that Joshua himself was desirous before he died to see their habits take the intended direction towards agriculture. And, no doubt, during those years in which the war was slackened or suspended, much progress was made in that transition by which the Hebrews were to pass into the condition of an agricultural people.

When Joshua felt that the day of his death was at hand, he called the people together, that before he died he might have the satisfaction of again receiving the pledge of their obedience to their Divine King and his institutions. He addressed them, and after reminding them of the miracles which had been wrought for them, and the victories and blessings with which

* See Josh. xxii. 21—29.

they had been favoured, he called upon them to purge away the idolatry which still lurked among them—no longer to serve "*the gods which their fathers served on the other side the flood* [Euphrates], *and in Egypt*," but to devote themselves in entire sincerity and truth to Jehovah. He demanded that they should at once decide the alternatives before them—either to serve Jehovah wholly, or the gods of their fathers and of the nations among whom they now dwelt; adding, "But as for me, and my house, we will serve Jehovah." To which the people heartily responded, "We also will serve Jehovah; for he is our God." He explained to them the obligations which that declaration involved; but they repeated it again, and once more in the usual terms of a solemn covenant. The terms of this covenant Joshua wrote down in the book of the law; and for a more public testimonial of this solemn engagement, he set up a great stone under an oak that grew hard by the tabernacle, and, in conformity with the ideas so usually connected with these memorials, he said, "Behold this stone *shall be a witness* unto us; for *it hath heard the words* of Jehovah which he spake unto us; it shall therefore be a witness against you lest ye deny your God."

Joshua could now die in peace. He did die soon after, at the advanced age of 110 years, (b. c. 1582) and was buried in the borders of his own inheritance, in the side of *the hill* Gaash. Eleazer, the high-priest, did not long outlive him. He was buried *in a hill* of Mount Ephraim, and was succeeded by his son Phineas. *Hills* are mentioned as places of burial, because the sepulchres were usually excavations in the sides of hills. Even at the present day the cemeteries (though only for graves) of the East are commonly upon the slopes of hills, outside the towns to which they belong.

The embalmed body of Joseph, which the Israelites had brought with them out of Egypt, had before this been deposited, according to his wish, in "the parcel of ground" at Shechem, which his father Jacob had given to him. That the lot gave to the tribe of Ephraim the territory which included this small patrimony, is a marked instance of the superintending power by which that mode of distribution was controlled and regulated.

The character which Joshua sustained is in many respects as peculiar as that of Moses, although of a very different nature. Joshua was not the successor of Moses, nor had Joshua himself any successor. They were both appointed to discharge peculiar and special services by the King, Jehovah. Moses was his minister in the deliverance and in legislating for the Hebrews: Joshua was his general, specially appointed by him to conquer the promised land and portion it out among the people. Not Moses, nor Joshua, but God himself, was the ruler of the state, and they were merely his servants. How eminently Joshua was qualified by his decision of character, his valour and his faith, for the duties confided to him, and how well and worthily he discharged them, has appeared in the narrative. "He was," in the language of Jahn, "a man whose whole life was devoted to the establishment of the theocratic policy, and consequently to the establishment of the true religion—services which ought to endear his memory to all succeeding ages."

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES.

(1) Stones of Memorial, p. 342.—To us there seem no antiquarian subjects more interesting than those which take us insensibly back to the beginnings of our race, and enable us to collect, in all the many-tongued and many-hued regions of the earth, manifest and unmistakable testimonies to any of the great facts which the ancient Scriptures record. From the length of time which has passed, from the destructibility of all human monuments, and from the mutations which time works in all man's habits and institutions, the existing evidences to facts of the earliest date might be supposed to be few in number: but the truth is far otherwise. The older the world grows the more thickly such evidence accumulates, so that the inquirer is perplexed rather by the extent and the variety than by the paucity of the materials which lie ready for his use. It is true that the illustrative monuments decay, and the institutions fall into disuse; but the discerning eyes have been

immensely multiplied, and they have passed to and fro, scanning the whole earth, and drawing most beautiful and true conclusions from things neglected of old, or regarded only with stupid wonder. Hence, although undoubtedly fewer in absolute number, the remaining testimonials have been turned to far greater account than was their abundance in remoter times. They were as diamonds in the mine, hidden and obscure, but have now been brought forth into the world to throw their radiance on dark things.

Among these lines of testimony few offer greater attractions than those which demonstrate that the family of man, now so diversified, was once *one*, speaking the same language, possessing the same religious practices and belief, and subject to the same customs, ideas, and habits. The evidences of this single fact are various and multiplied. The most marked are those which *stones* and *languages* offer. To the former our present attention is confined.

Monuments of large and rude stones, disposed in the various forms of which examples are given in the cuts at pages 341, 342, and whose date ascends, for the most part, beyond all history and tradition, are found dispersed all over the world, in countries the most remote from each other.

A friend who has given great attention to the subject, has favoured us with a list of such monuments, in different countries, from which it appears that not only are they numerous in Great Britain, Ireland, Jersey, Guernsey, Denmark, Sweden, France, and Germany, but that they have also been found in the Netherlands, Portugal, Malta and Gozo, in Phœnicia, and in India.* To which we may add, that such have also been discovered in Palestine, Persia, Northern Africa, North America, and the islands of the Indian Archipelago and of the South Sea.

Now seeing that such monuments are found in countries so far asunder, between which it is impossible to trace, *after that dispersion of which the Scriptures speak*, any such ancient communications as might have led to their production, and seeing, moreover, that the same Scriptures, as soon as they enter into detailed history—about 1000 years after the Deluge—begin to notice such monuments, not as new things, but as being in well-known and established use, it is morally impossible to account for their origin and wide dispersion, but by supposing that the ideas connected with them existed *before* the confusion of tongues divided the family of man into nations, and, together with the pressure of the wants arising from an increased population, drove them far asunder, bearing with them the notions and practices which had been common to them all.

* Chiefly in Malabar, also near Bombay.

In this explanation two lines of argument, from facts, terminate; for while, on the one hand, the remarkable agreement concerning the use of these monuments, in the most ancient times and among nations the most remote, is best explained by referring their origin to some time when men dwelt together, and had not yet spread themselves abroad in the world; on the other, we learn from Scripture that there was such a time, as well as its date and duration: and, what is more, as the same high authority takes occasion to notice the existence of such monuments about 500 years after the Deluge, in a family fresh from the original seat of the postdiluvian race, and in such a manner as to demonstrate that they were not *then* new, the historical proof ascends much nearer than could well be expected to the very period to which, on other grounds, we should be inclined to refer the origin of these remarkable monuments, and of the notions connected with them. Thus we think the lines of argument concur in bringing us to the same result—that the monuments called Druidical existed before the dispersion of mankind; and that their existence in all the countries of the world is to be accounted for by the fact, that men carried with them, in their migrations from the parent seat, the more prominent usages of their primitive condition.

All this seems so clear, that we should hardly have thought this expression of the view we entertain, worth the space it has occupied, were it not that a large class of antiquarians have been disposed to refer them to some later source—such as the maritime traffic of the Phœnicians. But all causes less than that which has now been stated, seem inadequate to account for the now ascertained extent to which such monuments have been diffused.

After this general statement on the subject, the definite object and limits of the present work, will necessarily confine us to the endeavour to show, that while the existing monuments of this description illustrate *the forms* of some of those which are mentioned in the history of the Hebrew people; the manner in which they are mentioned in that history throws light upon *the design and objects* of such monuments.

As, even in this limited extent, the subject is rather more extensive than we have been accustomed to deal with in these Supplementary Notes, it seems best to take one class of these monuments at a time, at the end of seve-

ral following chapters. And this arrangement will be the more satisfactory, as there are few of the immediately following chapters for some time yet in which the mention of such monuments will not occur. For the present we shall confine our attention to—

Stones of Memorial.* Nothing can be more certain than that the setting up of stones was one of the first means devised for recording the memory of important events and facts: and although, at the first view, it may seem that the objects are various with which stones are described as being set up in the Scriptures; yet, on closer consideration, it will be found that the diversity is only in the circumstances commemorated, while the idea of their being memorial monuments is the same in all.

The first instance is that of the stone which Jacob set up at Bethel,† to commemorate the vision with which he was there favoured, and to be a witness of the engagement he formed in consequence. It appears that this stone was not of a bulk too great for one man to set up,—not exceeding many ancient stones of memorial in our own country, about three or four feet high, standing single in fields or heaths, and by the sides of roads, without the least tradition now left when, or why, or by whom they were so placed.

Then there is the very remarkable affair which took place between Jacob and Laban, when the latter overtook the former in Gilead,‡ when a pillar *and* a heap of stones were made the monuments and evidences of a solemn compact of peace between them. Having already related this transaction, we need not repeat it here. But whoever reads the account as given in the Bible, will feel perfectly assured that Jacob and Laban were not originating any new practice, but were acting in conformity with usages then well known and established. And they could not be of any considerably higher date without belonging to the first men and the first ages.

Such monuments of erected stones, with heaps of stones at their base or nigh at hand, are far from being unknown among the most ancient monuments of our own country. In Cornwall there is one remarkable monument of this kind, with a heap of stones lying at its base in Boswen's Croft, Sancred. It answers so exactly to that which the description would suggest that Jacob and Laban erected, that if it had been found in the country beyond Jordan, travellers would probably have concluded it to be the same. A similar monument occurs in Oxfordshire, about half a mile to the south-west of Eston church. And Rowland * reports that in many places where there are carneddes, or heaps of stones, of great apparent antiquity, there are generally pillars of stone standing near them.

And not only are such monuments remaining, but a fragment of the ancient usages and ideas may be found in a superstitious regard paid to certain heaps of stones, as actual bonds of covenants, in remote and sequestered districts, where old customs and usages change but slowly. Thus in the Isle of Iona (one of the western islands of Scotland) there are certain stones called *black stones*, not from their colour, which is grey, but from the dire effects which tradition alleges to follow perjury, if any one becomes guilty of that crime, after having sworn on these stones in the usual manner; for an oath made on them was decisive of all controversies.†

Even when such large and ancient stones as we often see remaining apart, answered merely the purpose of boundary stones, as some of them unquestionably did, it seems very obvious that their being allowed through a long series of ages to be decidedly such *legal marks*, was actually in consequence of some solemn covenant, made on the spot between the parties claiming on both sides; of which covenant, before men learned to trust in written deeds and instruments, the erected stone was the vouched signature and proof, as much as in the instance of the agreement between Jacob and Laban, although the stone then set up was the proof of another sort of covenant. These covenant land-marks are probably those which the law so strictly forbids to be removed.‡

The twelve pillars which Moses set up, together with an altar, at the foot of Mount Sinai,§ and those which Joshua caused to be set up at Gilgal, and in the bed of the Jordan, are instances belonging to a class of monuments which we reserve for future notice.

The stone which Joshua set up under the oak at Shechem, as noticed at the end of the chapter just concluded, was avowedly an evidence and memorial of the covenant into which the people entered with God.

Besides the numerous stones, the occasion of the erection of which is mentioned in Scripture, there are such incidental references to other marked and conspicuous stones as show that monuments of this kind were numerous in the country. Thus, there is "the stone of

* King, in his *Munimenta Antiqua*, has a large and interesting chapter on this subject, of which we shall make much use; the more freely, as the work is too large and costly to be generally accessible.

† See p. 92 of the present work. ‡ See p. 98.

* 'Mona Antiqua,' 51.

† Martin's 'Western Islands of Scotland,' 259.

‡ Deut. xxxvii. 17. § Exod. xxiv. 4.

Bohan the son of Reuben;"* and in another place† we read of a well-known and distinguished stone of great magnitude, on which even the ark of God was placed when returned from the Philistines, and taken out of the cart by the Levites. This had before been well known as "the great stone of Abel."

Stones were also set up by the Hebrews as memorial monuments of their victories. Such was the *Ebenezer*, "the stone of help," set up by Samuel.‡

Such are also probably the erected stones which we find in our own country, of such magnitude, and standing so remote from heaps of stones and Druidical circles, that they can only be regarded as monuments of great victories, although all knowledge of such victories or events has perished. "They are," observes King, with much force, "like the pyramids of Egypt, *records of the highest antiquity in a dead language*." Of this kind are the three great stones represented in one of the engravings at p. 341. They stand near each other in a field at Trelech in Monmouthshire. They are of unequal height: the highest is thirteen or fourteen feet high. The neighbouring inhabitants call them Harold's Stones, for what reason does not appear; but from their great bulk, and the labour required to erect them, they must have been designed to perpetuate the memory of some event or victory, deemed at the time of the highest importance to the whole people. Historical instances of such erections of stones in commemoration of victories might be adduced: one is that of the stone set up by Malcolm, son of Kenneth, king of Scots, to commemorate a victory over the Danes about 1008.§

Another use of stone pillars, as indicated in Scripture, was to point out the graves of the dead. The earliest and most remarkable instance of this is offered by the pillar which Jacob set up over the grave of his beloved and beautiful Rachel. As the Hebrews generally placed their dead in excavated sepulchres, we must not expect to find sepulchral pillars common among them; and in fact they seem to have been chiefly employed for those dear or eminent persons whom it was necessary to inter remote from the sepulchres of their fathers, as in this case of Rachel. This custom was very general. The Greeks had for many ages no other monuments than such unhewn pillars, which they set up on the top of the barrow or tumulus. Several allusions to such monuments are found in the Iliad. It is not easy to distinguish the special appropriations of the stones we see dispersed abroad, but when we observe one set on the top of a barrow, we may safely conclude it to be sepulchral. This part of the subject needs little illustration, as all the ideas involved in it still exist. The erect stones which are everywhere —nowhere more than in our own country—set over graves, offer a modified continuance of the same practice and of the same ideas. And we have ourselves seen, in different parts of Europe and Asia, unhewn stones still in use for this purpose—the largest and longest stone that the immediate neighbourhood might offer, being chosen for the purpose, and embedded at one end in the sod. Although seldom of much bulk, and often small enough to be removed by a slight effort, they serve well their object. Strangers know that such stones mark *a grave*, and therefore respect them; and friends and neighbours know well *whose grave* they mark (information of no interest to a stranger), and thus these simple memorials sufficiently to an unsophisticated people

"The place of fame and elegy supply."

Seeing that unhewn stones were made the monuments of so many different circumstances, it is natural to think that in ancient times they were so distinguished that the spectator was at once aware of the classes of transactions which they were designed to commemorate. It has occurred to us that the diversified combinations in which such monuments are mentioned in Scripture may ultimately afford the key to a part of this lost knowledge. If we were to generalise such instances as have already been mentioned, we should probably conclude, that,—

Taken generally, they were *stones of memorial.*

The public or private, or the more or less important character of the transaction, would be indicated by the size of the stone, or the number of small stones—as suggesting that it was the work of one or more, of few or many men. The stone at Bethel was such as one man could manage. The more public event, the passage of the Jordan, was commemorated at Gilgal by such stones as singly a man could carry, but there were twelve of them. The public covenant at Shechem was commemorated by *a great stone*, such probably as required the united strength of many to fix in its place. The covenant between Jacob and Laban was commemorated by a heap of stones and a pillar; and as the heap of stones was the work of many men, the pillar was probably of proportionate dimensions. A stone commemorating a victory we should suppose to be large.

* Josh. xviii. † 1 Sam. vi. 15, 18.
‡ 1 Sam. vii. 12.
§ Gough's Camden, iii. 430.

Single stones are in Scripture memorials of covenants, victories, and boundaries.

A stone anointed with oil, or beside an altar, or under an oak, are always memorials of some sacred transaction or covenant, of some sacred obligation, of something between God and man. When Jacob anointed the pillar at Bethel, he pledged himself to build an altar there if he returned in safety; and on his return he redeemed that promise: it may, therefore, be conceived that the anointing denoted the sacred object of the monument, until this should be distinctly expressed by the erection, near at hand, of an altar for sacrifice. But as, with respect to these stones, altars were not always erected near them, even when occasion served, it appears that the anointing was in itself a consecration of the stone as a religious monument, although less in degree than the erection of an altar near at hand would have been—even in the same degree, probably, in which a libation was inferior, as a religious act, to a sacrifice. It will be observed that the appropriation of the great stone which Joshua set up at Shechem, as the signature of a religious covenant, was indicated by its juxtaposition with respect to more determinately religious objects, for it stood near the sanctuary, and therefore near the altar, which was outside the sanctuary. But what signification are we to deduce from its being placed *under an oak?* As most certainly oaks denoted the *religious* appropriation of any monuments of stone which might be connected with them, may it not be that Joshua thus provided for denoting the sacred character of his monument, in case the tabernacle should be removed to another place? Or a general explanation given by a very ingenious writer,* without any reference by him to this particular case, would imply that a stone *under an oak* was a monument of a Divine covenant. He observes that the same word in Hebrew denotes an oak and an oath; whence oaks came to be regarded with great veneration, as sacred emblems of divine covenants. The tree has for this reason been held in especial reverence, at one time or other, by almost all nations. If this notion be true, the object of Joshua in connecting his stone with an oak is sufficiently obvious.

From the only instance which occurs historically in the Scriptures, that of Jacob and Laban, it might be inferred that a pillar, together with a heap of stones, indicated a public covenant between two families, clans, or tribes.

A pillar upon or at the end of a mound, may appear, from the case of Rachel's sepulchre, and the others which have been adduced, to have denoted a sepulchre.

And since heaps of stone have been mentioned in connection with pillars of unhewn stone, this seems a proper place to ask what such heaps signify when they stand apart, without any apparent connection with pillars or other remains called Druidical? In every Scriptural instance they are monuments of infamy, raised over the bodies of those who died in crime, or whose memories it was intended to dishonour. Such are the heaps of stones reared over the remains of Achar, of the king of Ai, and of Absalom. Accordingly many cairns opened in this country have been found to contain human remains. It is true that some have been opened without any such appearances;* but in such cases, perhaps, the bodies had been burned, as in the case of Achar, and the stones raised over the ashes only: and it is likely that many cairns which now appear isolated, had originally pillars connected with them, as covenant memorials. A large single stone is more liable to be removed, from its applicability to useful purposes, than a heap of stones. The ideas connected with this class of monuments still exist in Syria and Palestine, where it is usual for every one who passes by to throw a stone to the heap, to express his detestation of the deed which the heap commemorates, as well as to contribute to the maintenance and increase of the memorial. One of these cairns, of very large size, occurs near the northern extremity of the Dead Sea,† certainly not remote from the place where the Israelites raised a cairn over the remains of the sacrilegious Achar.

We submit these views respecting the possible meaning of the various forms and combinations of memorial stones and heaps with very much diffidence. We are perfectly aware that the subject is one of great difficulty; and we only profess to have endeavoured to collect the ideas which seem, in the instances given in Scripture, to be associated with the monuments of this kind which it mentions.

([2]) Lots, p. 344.—There are many instances of lots being made use of, not only for the discovery of guilty persons, but for various other purposes, good and bad. For the former purpose we have not only this present instance and that of Saul and Jonathan,‡ among the Jews, but by the other nations, as in the case of Jonah. There is much diversity of opinion as to the manner in which these lots were taken.

* The Rev. W. Cooke, in his 'Inquiry into the Patriarchal and Druidical Religion,' &c. 1755.

* Sir R. C. Hoare's 'Ancient Wiltshire,' ii. 113, 114.

† Monro, i. 146.

‡ 2 Sam. xiv. 38, &c.

We only know with certainty that, in this and similar instances, when a particular person was to be found, either for punishment, or honour (as in the election of Saul to the kingdom), the lot first determined the particular tribe, and then went through the descending branches of each family, till it at last reached the particular person. But *how* this was done we know not: Josephus only says that the proceeding took place before the high-priest and the elders.* To which some of the Jewish writers add, that they were made to pass before the ark, and that the *urim* enabled the high-priest to pitch upon the right tribe, family, and person. Others will have it that the high-priest alone was enabled, by extemporaneous inspiration, to make the required indications. But there seems more probability in the opinion of those who suppose that at first twelve lots or tickets, on each of which was written the name of one of the tribes, were put into an urn; that when one of the tribes was found guilty, as many lots were put in as there were families in that tribe; after that, as many as there were householders in the family that was taken; and then as many as there were persons in the selected household, until, at last, the right person was found. That the lot, as practised by the Hebrews, was lawful, is unquestionable; for it was not only countenanced, if not enjoined, by God himself, but was practised by the Apostles. They, however, as well as, at least, the earlier Jews, had a well-grounded assurance, from experience, that, when resorted to as a means of taking the will of God, he would respond to the appeal. This assurance arose from and was justified by the peculiar relation in which they stood to Him: and of course is not justifiable or applicable under other and general circumstances, in which it is impossible that this assurance can be realised.

* Antiq. lib. v. cap. 1.

(3) THE SHOWER OF STONES, p. 346.—It is very doubtful whether a shower of hail-stones, or of bodies actually stony, or at least mineral, is intended. The text, literally rendered, is, "And JEHOVAH caused *great stones* to fall [or to be cast down] upon them, and many more died by the *hail-stones* [אבני הברד] than by the sword." This would be clear enough were it not that the word rendered *hail*, in its proper bearing and connection here, seems less to state that the stones were actually hail-stones than to express the vast quantity, the force, and execution of the stony shower; and the expression of flying, or falling, as thick as hail, is common in all ancient languages, and is retained in most of the modern. On this ground many interpreters, especially of late years, have been disposed to consider a shower of stones as the most obvious and natural explanation. This question has been argued without any wish to magnify or diminish the prodigy. *That* is nearly the same either way: for hail-stones capable of killing men, are about as rare as showers of stone, while the latter are more capable, when they do occur, of producing serious effects. That the shower was timed so opportunely, and that it did not fall on the Israelites, but only on their enemies, are circumstances sufficient to refer the phenomenon to its true source, whether it were of stones or of hail. Either way, however, there is no doubt that a natural agency was employed. It was the time and the application that constituted the supernatural interposition.

A shower of stones is as *natural* as a shower of hail, but it is certainly of far less frequent occurrence. Several instances of such showers, some of them extensively fatal to life, have been recorded by the most credible ancient historians, and some have occurred to modern observation. The countries in which the recorded instances have occurred the most frequently are Italy, Greece, and Asia Minor. The fact of such showers is now no longer doubted by any scientific man, although they account for them rather differently. So lately as 1803, and so near as L'Aigle in Normandy, there was a fall of several stones weighing from ten to seventeen pounds each. However remote the places in which they fall, these mineral bodies are always found to be distinguished by one remarkable similarity, namely, their containing an alloy of iron and nickel, generally with twenty-five of the former to six or eight of the latter.*

Yet that hail-stones might be an adequate second cause of the described effect is proved by numerous examples of old and modern date. Such have indeed occurred in our own island. Dr. Halley describes two remarkable falls of hail which occurred in April and May, 1697. The latter was the most extraordinary. It occurred in Hertfordshire after a storm of thunder and lightning. Several persons were killed by the hail, their bodies being beaten black and blue: vast oaks were split by it, and fields of rye cut down as with a scythe. The stones measured from ten to thirteen or four-

* The reader may find much curious information on this subject in King's 'Remarks on certain Stones said to have fallen from the Clouds, both in these days and in Antient Times." 1796.

teen inches in circumference. Their figures were various, some angular, some oval, some flat.* In the remarkable hail-fall, described by Dr. Neill,† which occurred during a thunder-storm in the Orkneys, 24th July, 1818, mingled with ordinary hail were enormous masses of ice, some as large as the egg of a goose, whereby animals were killed, and several persons wounded. An enormous hail-stone is recorded to have fallen, among other large masses, at Handsworth House, near Birmingham, during a thunder-storm in July, 1811. It consisted of a cuboidal mass, six and a half inches in diameter, and resembled a congeries of frozen balls, about the size of walnuts.‡

(4) The Sun standing still, p. 347. There are very few modern interpreters who have not expressed their belief that the expressions employed by Joshua are to be understood only as figurative. But they differ much in the extent to which they press this figure, and in the meaning which they assign to it. It will amount to the same thing if, instead of being figurative, the words were employed merely in accommodation to the astronomical notions which at that time and long after prevailed—whether this arose from ignorance of the true astronomy on the part of Joshua, or from an intention to use only such expressions as should be intelligible to the people.

It is well known that this passage long formed a stumbling-block to the general reception of the Copernican system ; because it ascribes the diurnal motion to the sun which that system gives to the earth itself. But now, even those who contend in general for the literal interpretation of all Scripture, for the most part allow that the suspension of the earth's motion is the *utmost* we are required to understand. And the sun being at rest, as it respects the diurnal motion, it is indeed impossible that by the discontinuance of a motion, in order to produce the phenomenon of protracted day, anything more than the suspension of the motion which actually occasions the phenomena of day and night could be intended ; and that is the motion of the earth, not of the sun—yet so *apparently* that of the sun, that forms of speech still current among ourselves justify and explain the true meaning of the words which Joshua employed. Indeed, we will hazard an opinion that a modern general, under the same circumstances, would not be intelligible to an English army if, instead of commanding the sun to stand still, he ordered the motion of the

* Philosophical Transactions, No. 229.

† Edin. Philos. Trans., vol. ix.

‡ Traill's Physical Geography, p. 192.

earth to be suspended. The observations which we have offered in the text, are less intended to explain the miracle, than to show that natural motion is not necessarily there ascribed to the sun, and withheld from the earth.

That there was adequate cause, in the manifestation of the Divine power and greatness, for a very signal miracle, has been intimated in the text; and therefore the objection, that it is unlikely that the motion of the earth should be suspended for so inadequate a cause as that of enabling Joshua to complete his victory over the already defeated Canaanites, is of no solid weight. But there are those who very sincerely believe that " the whole machinery of the universe is in the hand of God, and he can stop the motion of the whole or any part of it with less trouble than any of us can stop a watch,"* who yet, very properly, wish to know what it is that they are required to believe. *If it is clearly affirmed* or implied that the earth stood still, they see nothing to hinder them from believing that it was so, even though all the particulars may not be perfectly comprehensible to them. Although, therefore, it may be evident that in one or two instances the authors of the alternatives we are about to submit, were actuated by a desire to pare down the miracle to their own capacities of belief, it would be exceedingly unfair to say that all those who have arrived at a conclusion short of that which teaches that the motion of the earth was suspended, were influenced by any other motive than a desire to ascertain the truth.

There are certain general principles on which nearly all these explanations proceed. In the first place we are reminded that in all the works of God, and even in his miraculous dispensations, there is no inordinate or lavish waste of power; or, in other words, that the second cause employed is adequate, and not more than adequate, to the production of the required effect,—that He does not speak in thunder when the small still voice would be equally operative. Hence it is argued that if there be any act of Divine power, whereby the required prolongation of the day might be produced, we are at liberty to seek for it, instead of at once concluding that the words imply so serious a derangement of our system as, it appears, even the stoppage of earth and moon must have occasioned.

Then, again, we are reminded that it is said by a writer, certainly posterior in point of time to this transaction, that " no prophet since was like unto Moses, with respect to the signs and wonders which he wrought."† But the miracle,

* Bishop Watson.

† Deut. xxiv. 10, 11.

now in question, if understood literally, or as indicating a discontinuance of the earth's motion, very far exceeded all the miracles wrought by the hand of Moses. They were local; and for the most part limited to the particular occasions which rendered them necessary; but this stupendous miracle must have extended to the whole world, and must have been felt even at the antipodes as the greatest prodigy that could possibly happen. It is also singular that if the miracle had been by the Hebrews themselves understood in this extent, there is no allusion to it in any subsequent passage of Scripture. There is no early miracle which is not mentioned repeatedly—to magnify the greatness, the mercy, or the judgment of God—by the psalmists and the prophets; but to this, the greatest of them all, and the one by which, at least,the power of God would be the most magnified, no reference is made. Even the apostle, when, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, enumerating the examples of faith which the old saints afforded, takes particular notice of the destruction of Jericho, and the stay of Rahab, both of which belong to the time, and were connected with the history of Joshua, and are recorded in the same book, passes by this astonishing event, although it is recorded in the same book in which he found these far less important instances of what he wished to illustrate. The inference from this is, that although there certainly was a miracle in the matter, it was understood by the later sacred writers to be something far less stupendous than later and more literal interpreters have been led to imagine.

Considering all these circumstances, it is deemed probable that the words of Joshua and the context are to be regarded as an example of those bold metaphors and poetical forms of expression with which the Scriptures abound. Further, we are reminded, in confirmation of this opinion, that the historian refers to the Book of Jasher, in which this transaction had been previously recorded. Now this book (which is also referred to in 2 Sam. i. 18) appears to have been a collection of contemporary songs or poems, in celebration of remarkable events; or, perhaps, a poetical chronicle, of which there are examples in most early histories. In such a work we might expect to find examples of those bold figures for which the Hebrew and all other Oriental poetry is celebrated; and in reading which it would be productive of very serious mistakes if we fettered our judgment to that literal sense to which, in other cases, we are right to adhere. Would we understand literally such expressions as, "The deep uttered his voice, and lifted up his hands on high." (Hab. iii. 10).—"Let the floods clap their hands; let the hills be joyful together." (Ps. xcviii. 8).—"The valleys shout for joy, they also sing." (Ps. lxiii. 13).—"I will make mine arrows drunk with blood." (Deut. xxxiii. 42).—"The mountains melted." (Judg. v. 5).—"The stars in their courses fought against Sisera" (verse 20).—"The mountains shall be melted with their blood, and all the host of heaven shall be dissolved."? (Isa. xxxiv. 3, 4). After being accustomed to such sublimity of metaphor, we should not refuse to entertain the idea, that some bard made Joshua speak in the same lofty strain; and that the few words here quoted from the Book of Jasher, consisting of two hemistichs, formed only part of an ode celebrating the defeat of the five kings. The historian, in repeating to an audience contemporary with the event, the well-known words of a contemporary poet, is not liable to be misunderstood, however figurative may be the terms employed. To such an audience it would have seemed an impertinence to explain the sense in which the familiarly-known figure was to be understood.

Under such impressions various writers have thought themselves at liberty to inquire what these expressions, supposed by them to be figurative, might really denote.

Josephus only says that the day was lengthened, that the night might not come on too soon.* Maimonides interprets the passage to mean that Joshua's wish only was that the sun might not go down till his victory was completed; and that this was heard, by his being enabled to do as much execution in one day as would otherwise have required two days.† Another Jewish writer, Spinosa, followed by more than one recent commentator, reduces the miracle to the application of a natural second cause, to the prolongation of the day, for the use, at the time wanted, and by the desire of Joshua. And this is supposed to have been effected by the refraction of the sun's rays by the atmosphere, which was then more than ordinarily charged with hail.‡

Grotius is so much influenced by the omission of any allusion to this stupendous event, as literally understood, by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, when it was so much to his purpose to have adduced it, that he is disposed to agree with Maimonides.§ Peirerius supposes the phenomenon which occasioned a prolonged daylight was local only,—confined to Palestine,—or perhaps even to the territories

* 'Antiq.' v. 1. 17. † 'More Nevochim,' ii. 39.
‡ 'Tract. Theologico-politic.' c. 2.
§ Comment. in Josh. x. 14.

about Gibeon; which he imagines were enlightened by a kind of twilight, or something like our aurora borealis, which continued long enough to answer the purpose for which it was required.* Le Clerc, who argues the question generally, fortifies by additional arguments the theories of the two preceding writers, without proposing any new explanation of his own.

It is evident from what has been said, that, as usually understood and translated, the text, if not figurative, must indicate the discontinued motion of the earth, and, with it, of the moon. Bishop Gleig, whose additions and elucidations have given a fresh value to a rather indifferent book,† after contending with great earnestness and ability for the fitness of our belief in this, and stating the reasons for such belief, *if it be required;* goes on to intimate his impression, or rather to state the alternative, that the text is open to other interpretation. He says:—

"It does not, however, appear that an actual cessation of the motion of the earth was necessary to produce all that happened according to the narrative of the sacred historian. The radical import of the word דום which some take to be *silence*, and others, as our translators, *stillness*, is *equable, level, uniform, even, parallel*; and the words בחצי השמים which, in our version, are rendered 'in the midst of heaven,' signifying in that division of the heavens which is made by the visible horizon; from all which it follows, that the sun must have been in the horizon, just ready to set, when Joshua issued the command which appeared to arrest him in his course. The word שמש, which we render sun, signifies rather the *solar light* than the *orb* of the sun; and therefore the whole passage might be thus rendered:—'Solar light, remain thou upon Gibeon; and be thou, moon, stayed, or supported, over the valley of Ajalon: and the solar light remained, and the moon was stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the Book of Jasher? So the solar light lingered in the division of the heavens, or in the horizon, and hasted not to go down about a whole day.'

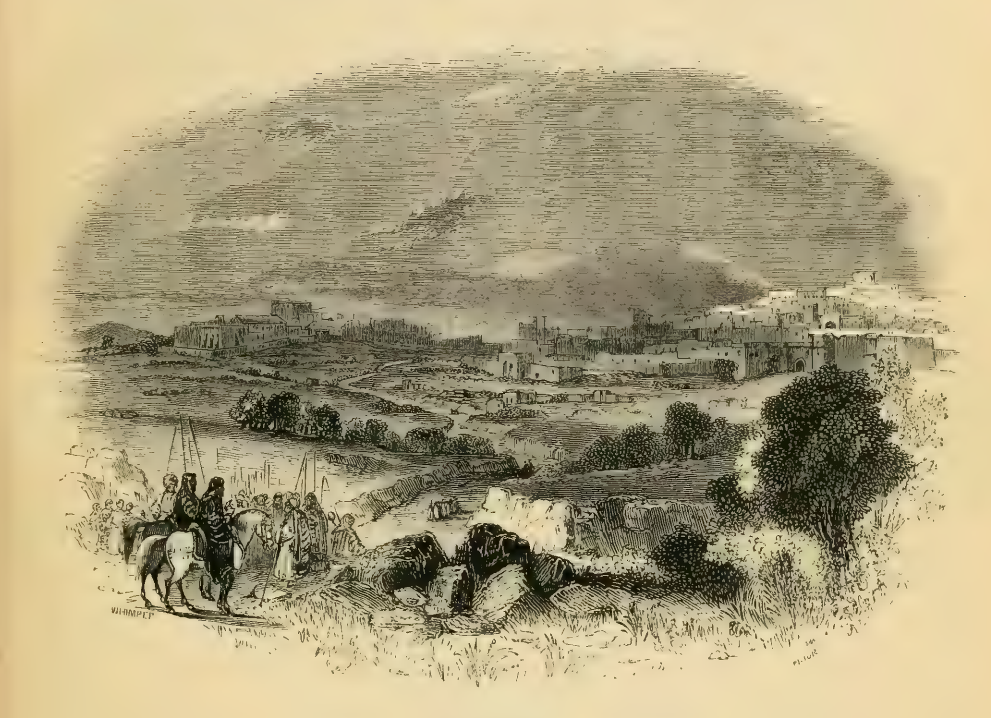
"But all this may have been produced, not indeed without a miracle, and a great miracle, but certainly without stopping the rotatory motion of the earth. We know that the sun, by one of the present laws of Nature, appears to be in the horizon, after he has actually sunk a degree or two below it. What is the cause of this phenomena? The common reply is, the *refractive power* of the atmosphere; but this, like the words *attraction* and *repulsion* in astronomy, is nothing more than metaphorical language; for, in the proper sense of the word, the atmosphere can have no *power*. The fact is simply this, that by the *will of God*, which first brought the universe into being, and now supports it in its present form, a ray of light, passing obliquely out of a rare medium into a denser, is bent at the point of incidence towards the perpendicular, and bent more or less according to the density of the medium into which it passes. If the rays of the setting sun be so bent at present as to make him appear visible in the horizon, when we know him to be a certain number of degrees below it, might not He, who by a mere act of volition, produces regularly this effect, by a different act of volition, so order matters, that a ray of light, passing from the sun to this earth, should be so bent at the angle of incidence, and during its progress through the atmosphere, which is of unequal density, as to make the sun visible at once over half the globe, or even over the whole? No man of reflection will say that He could not; and if so, the solar light might have been made to linger on the temples of Gibeon, and the moon to appear in the valley of Ajalon, without stopping the diurnal rotation of the earth, and producing that violent re-action which is commonly urged as an insuperable objection to the Scriptural account of this miracle. The objection in itself is, indeed, of no force; for He who could make the rotation of the earth to cease for a few hours could, at the same time, prevent the *natural* consequences of such a sudden cessation of motion so rapid; and to Almighty power it was as easy to do all this as to bend a ray of light round half the surface of our globe, which would have equally served the only purpose for which the miracle appears to have been wrought. The bending of the ray would have been just as great a miracle as suspending the motion of the earth; for by either means the duration of the light of day would have been so protracted, as to render that day without a parallel in the annals of the world; and I have stated the alternative only to show the unlearned reader that there is nothing in this stupendous miracle more difficult to be conceived than there is in every other work of Almighty power —even in the ordinary works carried on according to what is called the laws of Nature."

* Præadamit. iv. 6.

† Stackhouse's 'History of the Bible:' Bishop Gleig's edition is in three quarto volumes. London, 1817.

CHAPTER II.

FROM JOSHUA TO GIDEON.



[Bethlehem.]

From Joshua to Samuel (a period of about 474 years) the condition of the Israelites varied according as the fundamental law of the state was observed or transgressed, exactly as Moses had predicted, and as the sanctions of the law had determined.

The last admonitions of Joshua, and the solemn renewal of the covenant with Jehovah, failed to produce all the effect intended. That generation, indeed, never suffered idolatry to become *predominant*, but still they were very negligent with respect to the expulsion of the Canaanites. Only a few tribes made war upon them, and even they were soon weary of the contest. They spared their dangerous and corrupting neighbours, and, contrary to express statute, were satisfied with making them tributary. They even became connected with them by unlawful marriages, and then it was no longer easy for them to exterminate or banish the near relatives of their own families. The Hebrews thus rendered the execution of so severe a law in a manner impossible, and wove for themselves the web in which they were afterwards entangled. Their Canaanitish relatives invited them to their festivals, where not only lascivious songs were sung in honour of the gods, but fornication and unnatural lusts were indulged in *as part of the Divine service*. These debaucheries, then consecrated by the religious customs of all nations, were gratifying to the sensual appetites; and the subject of

Jehovah too readily submitted himself to such deities, so highly honoured by his connections, and worshipped in all the neighbouring nations. At first, probably, a symbolical representation of Jehovah was set up, but this was soon transferred to an idol, or was invoked as an idol by others. Idolatrous images were afterwards set up, together with the image of Jehovah, and the Israelites fondly imagined that they should be the more prosperous if they rendered homage to the ancient gods of the land. The propensity to idolatry, which was predominant in all the rest of the world, thus spread itself among the chosen people like a plague. From time to time idolatry was publicly professed, and this national treachery to their king, Jehovah, always brought with it national misfortunes.

However, it does not appear that any form of idolatry was *openly* tolerated until that generation was extinct, which, under Joshua, had sworn anew to the covenant with Jehovah. After that the rulers were unable or unwilling any longer to prevent the public worship of pagan deities. But the Hebrews, rendered effeminate by this voluptuous religion, and forsaken by their king, Jehovah, were no longer able to contend with their foes, and were forced to bend their necks under a foreign yoke. In this humiliating and painful subjection to a conquering people, they called to mind their deliverance from Egypt, the ancient kindnesses of Jehovah, the promises and threatenings of the law: then they forsook their idols, who could afford them no help,—they returned to the sacred tabernacle, and then found a deliverer who freed them from their bondage. The reformation was generally of no longer duration than the life of the deliverer. As soon as that generation was extinct, idolatry again crept in by the same way, and soon became predominant. Then followed subjection and oppression under the yoke of some neighbouring people, until a second reformation prepared them for a new deliverance. Between these extremes of prosperity and adversity, the consequences of their fidelity or treachery to their Divine king, the Hebrew nation was continually fluctuating until the time of Samuel. Such were the arrangements of Providence, that as soon as idolatry gained the ascendancy, some one of the neighbouring nations grew powerful, acquired the preponderance, and subjected the Hebrews. Jehovah always permitted their oppressions to become sufficiently severe to arouse them from their slumbers, to remind them of the sanctions of the law, and to turn them again to their God and king. Then a hero arose, who inspired the people with courage, defeated their enemies, abolished idolatry, and re-established the authority of Jehovah. As the Hebrews, in the course of time, became more obstinate in their idolatry, so each subsequent oppression of the nation was always more severe than the preceding. So difficult was it, as mankind were then situated, to preserve a knowledge of the true God in the world, although so repeatedly and so expressly revealed, and in so high a degree made manifest to the senses.*

After this general view of the whole period to which the remainder of the present book is devoted, we may proceed to the historical details from which that view is collected.

Soon after the death of Joshua, and while the contemporary elders still lived, the Israelites made some vigorous and successful exertions to extend their territory. The most remarkable of these exertions was that made by the tribe of Judah, assisted by that of Simeon. They slew 10,000 Canaanites and Perizzites in the territory of Bezek, the king of which, Adoni-bezek (literally, "my lord of Bezek"), contrived to make his escape; but he was pursued and taken, when the conquerors cut off his thumbs and great toes. Now this, at the first view, was a barbarous act. It was not a mode in which the Hebrews were wont to treat their captives; and the reason for it—that it was intended as an act of just retaliation, or, as we should say, of poetic justice—appears from the bitter remark of Adoni-bezek himself: —"Three score and ten kings, having their thumbs and great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table: as I have done, so God hath requited me." This proves that, as we have already on more than one occasion intimated, the war practices of the Israelites—especially in the treatment of their captives—was not more barbarous, and, in many respects, less barbarous, than those of their contemporaries; and that even their polished neighbours, the

* Jahn, b. iii. sect. 20.

Egyptians, were not in this respect above them, we shall endeavour to show in a note at the end of the chapter.[1] Meanwhile we introduce in this and the following page some cuts by

[Captives bound.]

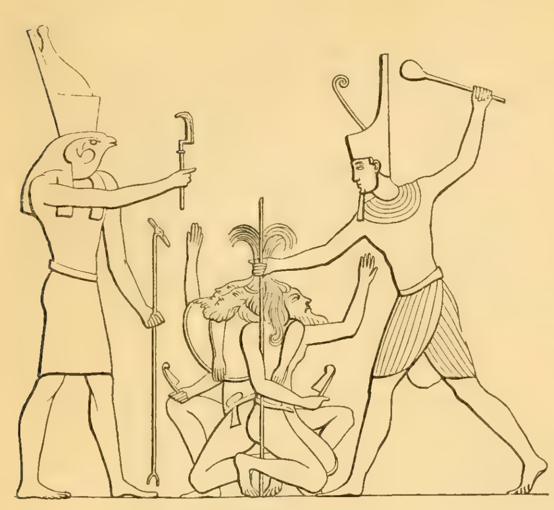
which the manner in which that nation treated their captives will be illustrated. Adoni-bezek died soon after at Jerusalem, to which place he was taken by the conquerors. They at this time had possession of the lower part of that town, and soon after succeeded in taking the



[Handcuffs.]

upper city, upon Mount Zion, which the Jebusites had hitherto retained. They sacked it and burned it with fire. But as we afterwards again find it in the occupation of the Jebusites, down to the time of David, it seems they took advantage of some one of the subsequent oppressions of Israel, to recover the site and rebuild the upper city.

Eleazer the high-priest, as we have seen, did not long survive Joshua; and the remnant of the seventy elders, originally appointed by Moses to assist him in the government of the nation, soon followed them to the tomb. While these venerable persons lived, the Israelites remained faithful to their Divine King and to his laws. But soon after their death, the beginnings of corruption appeared. A timely attempt was made to check its progress by the remonstrances and threatenings of a prophet from Gilgal. But although they quailed under the rebuke which was there administered, the effect was but temporary. The downward course which the nation had taken was speedily resumed; and it is strikingly illustrated by some circumstances which the author of the Book of Judges has given in an appendix contained in the five last chapters of that book, but which we shall find it more convenient to introduce here in their proper chronological place.



[Immolation of Captives.]

The history of Micah furnishes a very interesting example of the extent to which even Israelites, well disposed in the main, had become familiarised with superstitious and idolatrous practices, and the curious manner in which they managed to make a monstrous and most unseemly alliance between the true doctrine in which they had been brought up and the erroneous notions which they had imbibed.



[Scribe counting Hands (cut off)]

A woman of Ephraim had, through a mistaken zeal, dedicated a large quantity of silver (about 550 ounces) to the Lord, intending that her son should make therewith a teraph,* in the hope that by this means she might procure to her house the blessings of One who had absolutely forbidden all worship by images. Her son Micah knew not of this sacred appropriation of the money, and took it for the use of the house. But on learning its destination, and hearing his mother lay her curse upon the sacrilegious person by whom she supposed it had been stolen, he became alarmed, and restored her the silver; and received it again from her with directions to give effect to her intention. This he did. He provided a teraph, and all things necessary to the performance of religious services before it, including vestments for a priest. He set apart one of his own sons as priest, until he should be able to procure a Levite to take that character. He had not long to wait. It would seem that the dues of the Levites were not properly paid at this time; for a young Levite, who had lived at Bethlehem, felt himself obliged to leave that place and seek elsewhere a subsistence. Happening to call at Micah's

* See what has already been said of teraphim at p. 109 of this work.

house, he gladly accepted that person's offer to remain and act as priest for the recompense of his victuals, with two suits of clothes (one probably sacerdotal), and eleven shekels of silver.* Micah was delighted at this completion of his establishment, and, with most marvellous infatuation, cried, "Now I know Jehovah will bless me, seeing I have a Levite to be my priest." Things went on tranquilly for a time. But it happened that the tribe of Dan could not get possession of more than the hilly part of its territory, as the Amorites retained the plain, which was the most rich and valuable part. They therefore sought elsewhere an equivalent territory which might be more easily acquired. Having ascertained that this might be found in the remote but wealthy and peaceable town and district of Laish, near the sources of the Jordan, a body of 600 men was sent to get possession of it. From the persons they had previously sent to explore the country, they had heard of Micah's establishment; and so far from manifesting any surprise or indignation, they viewed the matter much in the same light as Micah did himself. They envied him his idol and his priest, and resolved to deprive him of both, and take them to their new settlement. They did so, notwithstanding the protests and outcries of the owner: and as for the Levite, he was easily persuaded to prefer the priesthood of a clan to that of a single family. His descendants continued long after to exercise the priestly office, in connection with this idol, at Dan—which was the name the conquerors gave to the town of Laish: and it is lamentable to have to add, that there is good reason to suspect that this Levite was no other than a grandson of Moses.

It would seem that the tribe of Benjamin had much the start of the other tribes in the moral corruption, in the infamous vices, which resulted from the looseness of their religious notions, and from the contaminating example of the heathen, with whom they were surrounded and intermixed.

A Levite of Mount Ephraim was on his way home with his wife, whom he was bringing back from her father's house in Bethlehem; and, on the approach of night, he entered the town of Gibeah, in Benjamin, to tarry till the next morning. As the custom of the travellers was, he remained in the street till some one should invite them to his house. But in that wicked place, no hospitable notice was taken of them until an old man, himself from Mount Ephraim, but living there, invited them to his home. In the night that house was besieged by the men of the place, after the same fashion and for the same purpose, as that of Lot had been, when he entertained the angels in Sodom. The efforts of the aged host to turn them from their purpose were unavailing: and as a last resource, the Levite, in the hope of diverting them from their abominable purpose, put forth his wife into the street. She was grievously maltreated by these vile people until the morning, when they left her. She then went and lay down at the door of the house in which her lord lay; and when he afterwards opened it—she was dead. The Levite laid the corpse upon his beast, and hastened to his home.

There was a rather mysterious custom, in calling an assembly, by sending to the different bodies or persons which were to compose it a portion of a divided beast;† and it then became awfully imperative upon the party which received the bloody missive, to obey the call which it intimated. To give a horrible intensity to the custom in this case, the Levite—a man of obviously peculiar character—divided his wife's body into twelve parts, and sent one portion to each of the tribes of Israel. The horror-struck tribes, on receiving their portion of the body, and hearing the statement which the messengers delivered, agreed that such a thing had not before been heard of in Israel, and hastened to the place of meeting, which was Mizpeh.

In the great audience there assembled, the Levite declared his wrongs; which, when they had heard, the thousands of Israel vowed not to return to their homes until they had brought the offenders to condign punishment. And to express the earnestness of their purpose, they appointed one tenth of their whole number to bring in provisions for the rest, that the want of victuals might not, as often happens in Oriental warfare, oblige them to disperse before their object was accomplished. But, in the first instance, they sent messengers throughout the

* Equal to about twenty-five shillings.

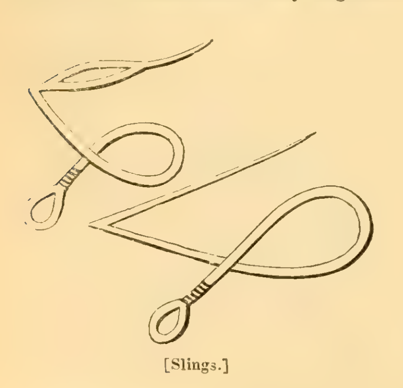
† See 1 Sam. xi. 7.

tribe of Benjamin, explaining the occasion of their assembling, and demanding that the offenders should be delivered up to justice. This the Benjamites were so far from granting that the whole tribe made common cause with the people of Gibeah, and all its force was called out to repel any attempt which the other tribes might make against them. Considering that the force of the eleven tribes amounted to 400,000 able men, whereas the Benjamites could bring together no more than 26,000, the hardihood of this resistance is well worthy of remark, if it does not make out the claim of the Benjamites to that character for indomitable courage which they appear to have acquired. Probably the influence of that acknowledged character upon their opponents, together with their own peculiar skill in the use of the sling, formed their main reliance. Among them there were 700 left-handed men who could sling stones to a hair's breadth and not miss.



[Egyptian Slingers.]

The Israelites committed one fatal oversight in this undertaking. Although the affair was of such grave importance, they neglected to consult their divine king, without whose permission they ought not to have supposed themselves authorised to act as they did. They first decided on war, and then only consulted him as to the manner it should be conducted. The consequence was, that they were twice defeated by the Benjamites, who sallied from the town of Gibeah against them. Corrected by this experience, they applied in a proper manner to learn the will of their king; and then the victory was promised to them.



[Slings.]

In their next attempt, the Israelites resorted to the same familiar stratagem of ambuscade and of pretended flight, when the besieged sallied forth against them, as that whereby the town of Ai had been taken by Joshua, and with precisely the same result. Eighteen thousand Benjamites, "men of valour," were "trodden down with ease" by the vast host which now enclosed them. The rest endeavoured to escape to the wilderness, but were all overtaken and destroyed, with the exception of 600 who found shelter among the rocks of Rimmon. The conquerors then went through the land, subjecting it to military execution. They set on fire all the towns to which they came, and put to the sword the men, the cattle, and all that came to hand.

But when the heat of the conflict and execution had subsided, the national and clannish

feelings of the Israelites were shocked at the reflection that they had extinguished a tribe in Israel. It was true that 600 men remained alive among the rocks of Rimmon; but it was not clear how the race of Benjamin could be continued through them, as, at the very commencement of the undertaking, the Israelites had solemnly sworn that they would not give their daughters in marriage to the Benjamites. They had now leisure to repent of this vow; although, with reference to the vile propensities exhibited by the people of Gibeah, it was quite natural that in the first excitement such a vow should have been taken.

But now they were sincerely anxious to find means of repairing their error, and to provide the survivors with wives, that the house of Benjamin might not be wholly lost. It was found that the summons whereby the tribes had been assembled, had been unheeded by the men of Jabesh-Gilead, whereby they had exposed themselves to the terrible doom which the very act of summons denounced against the disobedient. That doom was inflicted, save that all the virgins were spared to be wives for the Benjamites. But as these were still insufficient, the unprovided Benjamites were secretly advised to lie in wait in the vineyards near Shiloh, when they attended the next annual festival at the tabernacle; and when the young women of the place came out in dances, as at such times they were wont, they might seize and carry off the number they required. The men followed this advice. And when the fathers and brothers of the stolen maidens began to raise an outcry, the elders, by whom the measure had been counselled, interposed to pacify them, and persuaded them to overlook the matter, in consideration of the difficulties by which the case was surrounded.

The Benjamites then returned to their desolated cities, and rebuilt and re-occupied them as they were able. But from this time Benjamin was the least, although not the least distinguished, of all the tribes.

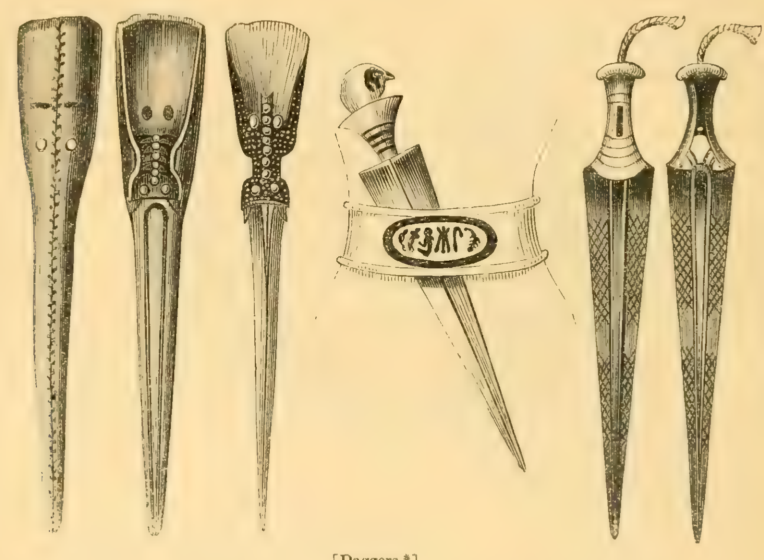
At length (B.C. 1572) the idolatries and demoralization of the Israelites had become so rank, that a fiery trial was judged necessary for their correction. A king named Cushan-rishthaim, reigning in Mesopotamia, had extended his power far on this side the Euphrates. He now advanced into Canaan, and, either by victory or menace, rendered the Hebrews tributary. They remained under severe bondage for eight years. At the end of that time, Othniel—that relative of Caleb who has already been mentioned—was incited to put himself at the head of the people and attempt their deliverance. The garrisons which the Mesopotamians had left in the country, were suddenly surprised and slain; the armies of Israel again appeared in the field, and, although at first few in number, they fought at every point the troops opposed to them; and when their numbers were increased by the reinforcements which poured in from all quarters on the first news of probable success, they hazarded a general action, in which they obtained a complete victory over the Mesopotamians, and drove them beyond the Euphrates.*

Othniel remained the acknowledged judge, or regent, of the divine king for forty years. During his administration, the people remained faithful to their God and King, and consequently prospered. But when the beneficial control which Othniel exercised was withdrawn by his death, they fell again into idolatry and crime, and new afflictions became needful to them.

The instruments of their punishment, this time, were the Moabites. By a long peace this nation had recovered from the defeats which they had suffered from the Amorites before the time of Moses: and, perceiving that the Israelites were not invincible, Eglon, the king of Moab, formed a confederacy with the Ammonites and Amalekites, and, with this help, made an attack upon them—probably under the same pretences which we shall find to have been employed on a subsequent occasion. He defeated the idolatrous Hebrews in battle, subdued the tribes beyond Jordan, and the southern tribes on this side the river, and established himself in Jericho, which he must have found a convenient post for intercepting, or at least checking, the communications between the eastern and western tribes. At that place the conquered tribes were obliged to bring him presents, or, in other words, to pay a periodical tribute.

* This paragraph is partly from Josephus, whose account is here in agreement with, while it fills up, the brief notice which the Book of Judges offers.

This subjection to a king who resided among them was still more oppressive than that from which they had been delivered by Othniel; and it continued more than twice as long—that is, for eighteen years. This oppression must have been particularly heavy upon the tribe of Benjamin, as it was their territory to which Jericho belonged, and which was therefore encumbered by the presence of the court of the conqueror. It was natural that those whose necks were the most galled by the yoke, should make the first effort to shake it off. Accordingly the next deliverer was of the tribe of Benjamin. His name was Ehud, one of those left-handed men—or rather, perhaps, men who could use the left hand with as much ease and power as the right—for which this tribe seems to have been remarkable. He conducted a deputation which bore from the Israelites the customary tributes to the king. It seemed that men with weapons were not admitted to the king's presence: but Ehud had a two-edged



[Daggers *]

dagger under his garment; but as he wore it on the right side, where it is worn by no right-handed man, its presence was not suspected. When he had left the presence, and dismissed his people, Ehud went on as far as the carved images,† which had been placed at Gilgal. The sight of these images, which the Moabites had probably set up by the sacred monument of stones which the Israelites had there set up, seems to have revived the perhaps faltering zeal of the Benjamite, and he returned to Jericho, and to the presence of the king, and intimated that he had a secret message to deliver. The king then withdrew with him to his "summer parlour," which seems to have been such a detached or otherwise pleasantly-situated apartment, as are still usually found in the mansions and gardens of the East, and to which the master retires to enjoy a freer air, and more open prospects than any other part of his dwelling commands, and where also he usually withdraws to enjoy his siesta during the heat of the day. It is strictly a private apartment, which no one enters without being specially invited; and accordingly it is said of this, that it was an apartment "which he had for himself alone." As the king sat in this parlour, Ehud approached him, saying, "I have a message from God to thee." On hearing that sacred name, the king rose from his seat, and

* All these specimens are ancient Egyptian daggers, and are precisely of the same form as those now generally used in Western Asia. They are always two-edged, like Ehud's dagger, and of about the same length, a foot and half. The group of three figures to the left represents the same weapon; the first (from the centre) shows the unsheathed dagger, the second represents it in its sheath, and that outside represents the back of the sheath. A very common way of using it is to stoop and endeavour to thrust it into the belly of the opponent.

† Not "*quarries*," as in our version. There are and can be no quarries in a plain like that which offered the site of Gilgal, near Jericho.

Ehud availed himself of the opportunity of burying his dagger in his bowels. The Benjamite then withdrew quietly, bolting after him the door of the summer parlour; and as such parlours usually communicate by a private stair with the porch, without the *necessity* of



[Summer Parlour on the Nile.]

passing into or through the interior parts of the mansion, there was nothing to impede his egress, unless the porters at the outer gate had seen cause for suspicion.

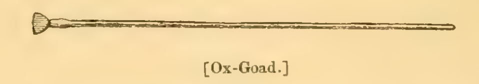
The Scripture, as is frequently the case, mentions this as a historical fact, without commendatory or reprehensive remark; and we have no right to infer the approbation which is not expressed. No doubt Ehud's deed was a murder; and the only excuse for it is to be found in its public object, and in the fact that the notions of the East have always been, and are now, far more lax on this point than those which Christian civilization has produced in Europe. There all means of getting rid of a public enemy, whom the arm of the law cannot reach, are considered just and proper. No one can read a few pages of any Oriental history without being fully aware of this: and it is by Oriental notions rather than by our own that the act of Ehud must, to a certain extent, be judged.

The servants of Eglon supposed that their lord was taking his afternoon sleep in his summer parlour, and hence a considerable time elapsed before his assassination was discovered.

In the mean time Ehud was able to make known the death of the king, and to collect a body of men, with whom he went down to seize the fords of the Jordan, that the Moabites in Canaan might neither receive reinforcements from their own country nor escape to it. Confounded by the death of their king, they were easily overcome. All who were on this side the Jordan—ten thousand in number—were destroyed; not one escaped. This deliverance secured for Israel a repose of eighty years, terminating in the year B.C. 1426, being 182 years after the passage of the Jordan.

At or towards the end of this period of eighty years, a first attempt was made by the Philistines to bring the southern tribes under their yoke. But they were unable to accomplish their design, having been repulsed on their first advance, with the loss of six hundred

men, by Shamgar and other husbandmen, who fought with ox-goads,* being then employed in the cultivation of the fields.



[Ox-Goad.]

From the manner in which Shamgar is mentioned in the regular narrative, it does not appear whether he took any part in the administration of affairs: but from the notice which is taken of "the days of Shamgar" in the song of Deborah, it is probable that he did. Dr. Hales thinks the term of his administration was included in the eighty years, and that his government in the west was contemporary, in part, with that of Ehud in the east. But in the absence of other positive information, it may be safe to prefer the statement of Josephus, who says that Shamgar *succeeded* Ehud, but died in the first year of his administration.

It is about this time that the story of Ruth, which occupies a separate book in the Hebrew Scriptures, is placed by Usher and other chronologers. Being episodical, and only slightly connected with the historical narrative, we cannot follow the details of this beautiful story; but the intimations of the state of society, and of the manners and ideas of the times, which it contains, are, even historically, of too much importance to be overlooked.

The scene of the principal part of the story is in Bethlehem of Judah, which has been several times mentioned in the course of this chapter.†

A famine in the land drives an inhabitant of this town, with his wife and two sons, to the land of Moab, which, in consequence of the victories under Ehud, seems to have been at this time in some sort of subjection to the Israelites. The man's name was Elimelech, his wife's Naomi, and the sons were called Mahlon and Chilion. The woman lost her husband and two sons in the land of Moab, but the childless wives of her sons, who had married in that land, remained with her. One was called Orpah, and the other Ruth. At the end of ten years, Naomi determined to return home, but, with beautiful disinterestedness, exhorted the widows of her two sons to remain in their own land with their well-provided friends, and not go to be partakers of her destitution. Orpah accordingly remained: but nothing could overcome the devoted attachment of Ruth to the mother of her lost husband. To the really touching representations of Naomi, her still more touching reply was, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following thee: for whither though goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me." This strong and unmistakable expression of most beautiful and true affections, could not be repelled by Naomi. They took their homeward way together.

It was barley harvest when Naomi and Ruth arrived at Bethlehem. Ruth, anxious to provide in any little way for their joint subsistence, soon bethought herself of going forth to seek permission to glean in some harvest field. It happened that the field where she asked and obtained this permission, from the overseer of the reapers, belonged to Boaz, a person of large possessions in these parts. Boaz himself came in the course of the day, to view the progress of the harvest. He greeted his reapers, "Jehovah be with you;" and they

* "At Khan Leban the country people were now everywhere at plough in the fields in order to sow cotton. 'Twas observable that in ploughing they used goads of an extraordinary size; upon measuring of several, I found them to be about eight feet long, and, at the bigger end, six inches in circumference. They are armed at the lesser end with a sharp prickle for driving the oxen; and at the other end with a small spade or paddle of iron, strong and massy, to clear the plough from the clay that encumbers it in working. May we not from hence conjecture that it was with such a goad as one of these that Shamgar made that prodigious slaughter? I am confident that whoever should see one of these implements will judge it to be a weapon not less fit, perhaps fitter, than a sword for such an execution. Goads of this sort I always saw used hereabout, and also in Syria: and the reason is because the same single person both drives the oxen and also holds and manages the plough, which makes it necessary to use such a goad as is described above, to avoid the incumbrance of two instruments."—Maundrell, 110.

† See the cut at the head of this chapter, from a drawing by Mr. Arundale.

answered him, "Jehovah bless thee." His attention was attracted towards Ruth, and he inquired concerning her of his overseer, who told him that this was "The Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the land of Moab," and related how she had applied for leave to glean after the reapers. Boaz then himself accosted her, and kindly charged her not to go elsewhere, but to remain in his fields, and keep company with his maidens till the harvest was over. He had enjoined his young men not to molest her. If she were athirst she might go and drink freely from the vessels of water provided for the use of the reapers. Ruth was astonished at all this kindness, and fell at his feet, expressing her thanks and her surprise that he should take such kind notice of a stranger. But he said, "It has been fully shown me, all that thou hast done to thy mother-in-law, since the death of thy husband; and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knowest not heretofore. Jehovah recompense thy deed: and a full recompense be given to thee from Jehovah, the God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust." She answered, "Let me find favour in thy sight, my lord, for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid, though I be not like one of thine handmaidens."





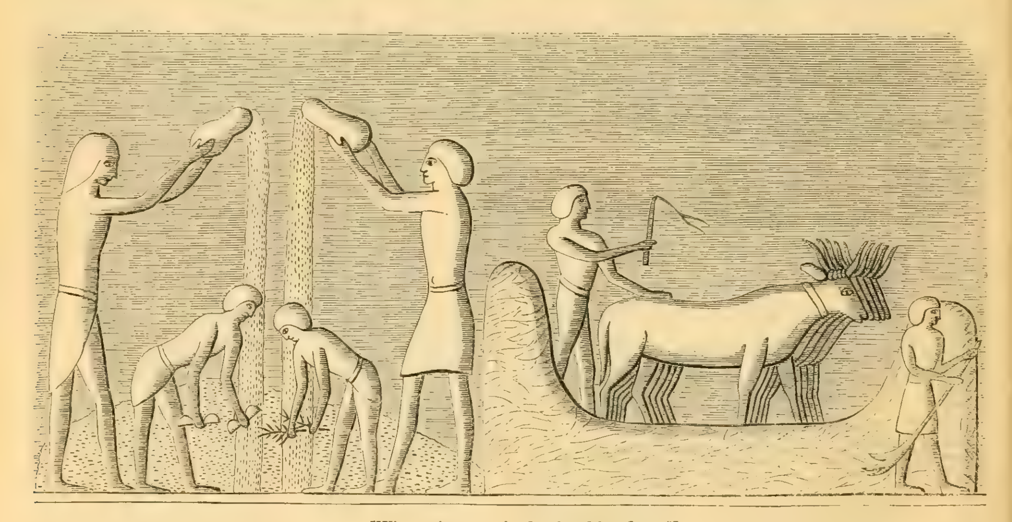
[Harvest.]

When the meal-time of the harvest people came round, Boaz invited her to draw near and eat of the bread, and dip her morsel in the vinegar with them. He also handed her some new corn parched, which was considered rather a luxury, and therefore Ruth reserved part of it for Naomi.

All these little incidents, beautifully descriptive of the innocent old customs of harvest time, bring strongly before the mind of one who has studied the antiquities of Egypt, the agricultural scenes depicted in the grottos of Eleithuias, in which so many of the usages of Egyptian agriculture are represented. There we see the different processes of cutting with the reaping hook, and of plucking up the stalks; gleaners; water refrigerating in porous jars (placed on stands) for the refreshment of the reapers; the reapers quenching their thirst; and women bearing away the vessels in which drink has been brought to them at their labour.

When Ruth returned home in the evening with the result of her day's gleaning—an ephah of barley—Naomi was anxious to know how it happened that her labours had been so prosperous: and when she heard the name of Boaz, she remarked that he was a near kinsman of the family; and advised that, according to his wish, Ruth should confine her gleaning to his fields. So Ruth gleaned in the fields of Boaz, until the end not only of the barley, but of the wheat harvest.

When the harvest was over, Naomi, who was anxious for the rest and welfare of the good and devoted creature who had been more than a daughter to her, acquainted her with what had lately engaged her thoughts. She said that Boaz was so near of kin that he came under the operation of the levirate law, which required that when a man died childless, his next of kin should marry the widow, in order that the first child born from this union should be counted as the son of the deceased, and inherit as his heir. It was, therefore, no less her duty than a circumstance highly calculated to promote her welfare, that Boaz should be reminded of the obligation which devolved upon him. But as it was not wished to press the matter upon him, if he were averse to it, it was necessary that the claim should, in the first instance, be privately made. In such a case, Ruth, a stranger very imperfectly acquainted with the laws and habits of the Israelites, could only submit herself to Naomi's guidance. She told Ruth



[Winnowing corn in the threshing-floor.*]

that Boaz was engaged in winnowing his barley in the threshing-floor; which, of course, was nothing more than a properly levelled place in the open air. Naomi conjectured he would rest there at night, and told Ruth to mark the spot to which he withdrew, and advance to claim the

* This cut is from the same source as the others. It not only shows the winnowing in the threshing-floor, according to the custom indicated, but illustrates another Scriptural custom, that of threshing out the corn by the treading of oxen.

protection he was bound to render. All happened as Naomi had foreseen. Boaz, after he had supped, withdrew to sleep at the end of the heap of corn; and after he had lain down, Ruth advanced and placed herself at his feet: and when he awoke at midnight, and with much astonishment, asked who she was, she answered, "I am Ruth, thy handmaid: take therefore thy handmaid under thy protection, for thou art a near kinsman." Those who, measuring all things by their own small and current standards, regard as improper or indelicate this procedure of one

'Who feared no evil, for she knew no sin,'

need only hear the answer of Boaz to be satisfied. "Blessed be thou, of Jehovah, my daughter....And now, my daughter, fear not: for all my fellow-citizens do know that thou art a virtuous woman." He added, however, that there was a person in the town more nearly related to her deceased husband; and on him properly the levirate duty devolved: but if *he* declined it, then it fell to himself, and he would certainly undertake it. It being too late for Ruth to return home, Boaz desired her to remain in the threshing-floor for the night. Early in the morning he dismissed her, after having filled her veil with corn to take to Naomi.



[Back Veil.]

In those times, and long after, it was customary to transact all business of a public nature and to administer justice in the gates. When there was little use of written documents, this gave to every transaction the binding obligation which the presence of many witnesses involved; and thus also justice was easily and speedily administered among the people, at the hours when they passed to and fro between the fields and the city. And such hours were, for this reason, those at which the judges and elders gave their attendance in the gates.

Boaz therefore went up to the gate; and requested ten of the elders, there present, to sit down with him as witnesses of what was to take place. When the "near kinsman" passed by, he called him to sit down with them. He then questioned him as to his willingness "to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance." This he was not willing to do, "lest

he should mar his own inheritance;" and therefore he was glad to relinquish his prior claim to Boaz, which he did by the significant action of drawing off his own shoe and giving it to him. This action was usual in all transactions of this nature, and it may well be interpreted by the familiar idiom which would express Boaz as being made, by this act and with reference to this particular question, *to stand in the shoes* of the person who had transferred to him his rights and duties. Boaz then declared all the people there present at the gate to be witnesses of this transfer, and they responded, "We are witnesses." After this Boaz took Ruth to be his wife; and the fruit of this union was Obed, the grandfather of David.

From the repose which this narrative offers, one turns reluctantly to renewed scenes of war, oppression, and wrong.

It may be doubted that the authority—such as it was—of any of the judges extended over all the tribes. Hardly any of the oppressions to which the Israelites were subject appear to have been general, and in most cases the authority of the judge appears to have been confined to the tribes he had been instrumental in delivering from their oppressors. There is, for instance, not the least reason to suppose that the authority of Ehud extended over the northern tribes, which had not been effected by the oppression of the Moabites, from which he delivered the south and east. The eighty years of good conduct which followed this deliverance, is therefore only to be understood as exhibited by the tribes which were then delivered. The northern tribes, and in some degree those of the centre and the west, were meanwhile falling into those evil practices, from which it was necessary that distress and sorrow should bring them back. And therefore they were distressed.

The northern Canaanites had, in the course of time, recovered from the effects of that great overthrow which they sustained in the time of Joshua. A new Jabin, reigning like his predecessor in Hazor, by the lake Merom, rose into great power. His general, Sisera, was an able and successful warrior; and his powerful military force contained not fewer than 900 of those iron-armed chariots of war which the Israelites regarded with so much dread. With such a force he was enabled, for the punishment of their sins, to reduce the northern tribes to subjection, and hold them tributary. Considering the character of the power which now prevailed over them, there is reason to conclude that this was the severest of all the oppressions to which Israel had hitherto been subject. The song of Deborah conveys some intimations of their miserable condition. The villages and open homesteads, which were continually liable to be pillaged, and the inhabitants insulted and wronged by the Canaanites, were deserted throughout the land, and the people found it necessary to congregate in the walled towns. Travelling was unsafe; in consequence of which the high-ways were deserted, and those who were obliged to go from one place to another, found it necessary to journey in bye-roads and unfrequented paths. At the places to which it was necessary to resort for water, they were waylaid and robbed, wounded, or slain: and, to crown all, they were disarmed; among 40,000 in Israel, a shield or spear was not to be found. The details of this picture are exactly such as are offered by the condition of any oppressed or subjugated population, at this day, in the East. The government itself may be content with its tribute; but it will be obliged to wink at, because unable to prevent, the far greater grievances, the exactions, robberies, insults, woundings, deaths, to which the people are subjected by the inferior officers of government, by bands of licentious soldiers, and by an adverse and triumphant populace,—all of whom look upon them as their prey and spoil, as things made only to be trampled on. Such oppression the Israelites endured for twenty years. They then remembered that, to them, trouble was the punishment of sin; and that there was One able and willing to deliver them, if they would but turn themselves unto Him. They did turn, and their deliverance was certain from that hour.

In those days a pious and able woman, well acquainted with the divine law, became an important person in Israel. Her name was Deborah, and she abode under a palm-tree in the southern part of Ephraim. Her high character for piety and wisdom occasioned the Israelites to resort to her for counsel and for justice; and it is not unlikely that her salutary influence

contributed to move the people to that repentance which prepared the way for their deliverance. When their punishment had thus wrought its intended object, the divine king made known to the prophetess his intention to deliver the house of Israel from its bondage; but seeing that she, as a woman, could not personally lead the Israelites to battle, she sent to a person of the tribe of Naphtali, named Barak, and communicated to him the instructions she had received. These were, that he should bring together, at Mount Tabor, 10,000 men of the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun, and with them give battle to the forces of King Jabin. Barak, being fully aware of the difficulty of assembling and arming a respectable force, and recollecting the greatness of that power he was to oppose, rather shrunk from the enterprise. He, however, offered to undertake it, if Deborah would afford him the benefit of her influential presence, but not else. She consented; but, to rebuke the weakness of his faith, she prophesied that Sisera—the redoubted captain of King Jabin's host—should not be slain in fight with him, or be taken captive by him, but should fall by a woman's hand.

They went into the north together, and the required number of men from Naphtali and Zebulun readily obeyed their call, and marched to Mount Tabor. These two tribes had probably been selected on the ground that they were likely to engage more readily in this service, in consequence of their vicinity to the metropolitan seat of the oppressing power having rendered the yoke of servitude more galling and irritating to them than to the other tribes.

As soon as Jabin's general, Sisera, heard of the Hebrew force assembled on Mount Tabor, he brought forth his 900 chariots, and assembled his whole army, not doubting to surround and cut in pieces a body of men so comparatively small. The Hebrews were, in general, much afraid of war-chariots, to drawn battles in open plains they were unaccustomed, and the disparity of numbers was in this instance very great. Yet, encouraged by the assurances of victory which Deborah conveyed, Barak did not await the assault of Sisera, but marched his men down from the mountain into the open plain, and fell impetuously upon the adverse host. In Oriental warfare the result of the first shock usually decides the battle, and the army is lost which then gives way, or has its ranks broken. So it was now. At the first shock, the vast army of Sisera was seized with a panic terror. The soldiers threw away their arms, and sought only how they might escape; while the chariots, drawn by terrified horses, impeded the retreat of the fugitives, and added to the confusion and the loss. The carnage among the Canaanites was horrible; and, besides those who perished by the sword, vast numbers of them were swept away by the sudden overflow of the river Kishon. Sisera himself fled in his chariot across the plain of Esdraelon; but, fearing that his chariot rendered him too conspicuous, he dismounted and continued his flight on foot. At last he came to a nomade encampment, belonging to Heber the Kenite, one of the descendants of those of the family and clan of Jethro, who, with the brother-in-law of Moses, entered the land of Canaan with the Israelites, and enjoyed the privilege of pasturing their flocks in its plains. Heber was from home, but his wife knew the illustrious fugitive, and offered him the protection of her tent. This, as the Kenites had been neutral in the war, Sisera did not hesitate to accept. He knew that the tent of a Bedouin, and especially the woman's portion of it, was a sanctuary, which the owner would sooner perish than allow to be violated, and that infamy worse than death awaited him who allowed injury to befall the guest or fugitive who was admitted to its shelter. Being athirst, Sisera asked for water; but instead of this, she gave him sour milk—the best beverage an Arab tent contains, and the refreshing qualities of which are well known to those who have travelled in the East. This, with his fatigue, disposed Sisera to sleep. As he slept, the thought occurred to Jael (that was the woman's name) that the greatest enemy of the now victorious Israelites lay helpless before her; and that it was in her power to win great favour from the victors, by anticipating the almost certain death which awaited the chief captain of Jabin's host. Having no weapon, she took a mallet and one of the long nails by which the tent cords are fastened to the ground, and stealing softly to the place where he lay, she smote the nail into his temple, pinning his head to the ground. Barak, passing that way

soon after, in pursuit, was called in by Jael, and he beheld the redoubted Sisera dead at his feet—slain ignominiously by a woman's hand. He might then have pondered whether, had Sisera been the victor and himself the fugitive, the same fate might not have been his own. When we reflect that "there was peace between Jabin, king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite," and that it was in the knowledge that he deserved no wrong at *their* hands, that Sisera accepted the shelter which Jael offered; and when, moreover, we consider that the emir, Jael's husband, had no interest in the result, save that of standing well with the victorious party, it will be difficult to find any other motive than that which we have assigned—the desire to win the favour of the victors—for an act so grossly opposed to all those notions of honour among tent-dwellers on which Sisera had relied for his safety. It was a most treacherous and cruel murder, wanting all those extenuations which were applicable to the assassination of king Eglon by Ehud.

The time is gone by when commentators or historians might venture to justify this deed. Our extended acquaintance with the East enables us to know that those Orientals whose principles would allow them to applaud the act of Ehud, would regard with horror the murder, *in his sleep*, of a confiding and friendly guest, to whom the sacred shelter of the tent had been offered. That Deborah, as a prophetess, was enabled to foretel the fall of Sisera by a woman's hand, does not convey the Divine sanction of this deed, but only manifests the Divine foreknowledge; and that the same Deborah, in her triumphant song, blesses Jael for this act, only indicates the feeling, in the first excitement of victory, of one who had far more cause to rejoice at the death of Sisera than Jael had to inflict it.

The triumphant song of Deborah has attracted great and deserved attention as a noble "specimen of the perfectly sublime ode." The design of this ode seems to be two-fold, *religious* and *political*: first, to thank God for the recent deliverance of Israel from Canaanitish bondage and oppression; and, next, to celebrate the zeal and alacrity with which some of the tribes volunteered their services against the common enemy; and to censure the luke-warmness and apathy of others who stayed at home, and thus betrayed the public cause; and by this contrast and exposure, to heal those fatal divisions among the tribes which were so injurious to the public weal. It consists of three parts:—1st, the exordium, containing an appeal to past times, where Israel was under the special protection of Jehovah, as compared with their late disastrous condition; next, a recital of the circumstances which preceded and those that accompanied the victory; lastly, a fuller description of the concluding event, the death of Sisera, and the disappointed hopes of his mother for his triumphant return. The admired conclusion is thus:—

"The mother of Sisera gazed through the window,
Through the lattice she, lamenting, cried,
'Why is his chariot so long in coming?*
Wherefore linger the steps of his steeds?'
Her wise ladies answered their mistress,
Yea, she returned answer to herself,—
'Have they not sped, and are dividing the spoil?
To every chief man a damsel or two?
To Sisera a spoil of various colours,
A spoil of various-coloured embroidery,
A spoil of various-coloured embroideries for the neck.'—
So let thine enemies perish, O Jehovah!
But let they who love thee become
As the sun going forth in his strength." †

* The original is highly figurative; *Why is his chariot ashamed to come?*

† "The first sentences exhibit a striking picture of maternal solicitude, and of a mind suspended and agitated between hope and fear. Immediately, impatient of delay, she anticipates the consolations of her friends; and, her mind being somewhat elevated, she boasts with all the levity of a fond female,—

'Vast in her hopes and giddy with success.'

Let us here observe how well adapted every sentiment, every word, is to the character of the speaker. She makes no account of the slaughter of the enemy, of the valour and conduct of the conqueror, of the multitude of the captives, but

'Burns with a female thirst of prey and spoils.'

Nothing is omitted which is calculated to attract and engage the passions of a vain and trifling woman; slaves, gold, and rich apparel. Nor is she satisfied with the bare enumeration of them, she repeats, she amplifies, she heightens every circumstance;

From the animadversions which this ode contains, it is easy to collect that only those tribes which were actually subject to the oppression, and even only those on which the oppression the most heavily fell, were willing to disturb themselves by engaging in warlike operations against the oppressor. It does not appear that the southern tribes and the tribes beyond Jordan were directly affected by the subjugation of the northern tribes; and even of those under tribute, the tribes more remote from the seat of king Jabin seem to have been more at ease than the others. All these were loth to come forward on this occasion; and, in general, we find that, among the Hebrews of this early period, there was little, if any, of that high-spirited and honourable abhorrence of a foreign yoke, which is, under God, the surest safe-guard of a nation's independence. It was not the yoke itself they hated, but its physical weight upon their shoulders; and that weight must be very heavy before they could be roused to any great effort to shake it from them. The iron which entered their souls in Egypt still rusted there.

These sectional divisions—or rather this want of a general and sympathising union among the several members of the house of Israel—was the obvious secondary cause of the miseries and oppressions under which different portions of that great body did from time to time fall; and this disunion itself was the natural and inevitable result of the neglect of the law, as a whole, and especially of those provisions which were, in their proper operation, admirably calculated to keep the tribes united together as one nation. It would be ridiculous to say that the theocratic policy was a failure. That which was not fairly and fully tried cannot be said to fail. Ruin to the people did not come from the system itself: and that ruin did come from the neglect of its conditions, rather shows how well that system was calculated to form a happy and united people.

The victory of Deborah and Barak over Sisera gave to Israel a long repose from the aggressions of the nations west of the Jordan; for although their peace began again to be disturbed after forty years (in 1336 B.C.), the invasion was then from the *east*.

At the latter end of the forty years which followed the victory over Sisera, the Israelites had again relapsed into their evil and idolatrous habits. This was particularly the case of the tribes beyond Jordan, whose repose had been of longer duration than that of the western tribes, for it does not appear that the oppressions of king Jabin had extended to them.

Their punishment was this time particularly heavy, and came from an unexpected quarter. The pastoral tribes dwelling on the borders of the land, and in the eastern deserts—the Midianites, Amalekites, with other tribes of Arabia—came swarming into the land "like locusts," with countless flocks and herds, and pitching their tents in the plains and valleys. Arriving by the time the products of the soil began to be gathered in, they remained until the final ingatherings of the year, when the advance of winter warned them to withdraw into their deserts. Thus their cattle grew fat upon the rich pastures of the land, while those of Israel were starved; and the men themselves lived merrily upon the grain which the Hebrews had sowed, and upon the fruits which they had cultivated: and as, besides this deprivation of the sustenance for which they had laboured, such lawless crews are always ready for any kind of great or small robbery and exaction, the Israelites were obliged to abandon the open country, and to resort to the walled towns, to entrench themselves in strongholds, and even to seek the shelter of the caves among the mountains. Even those who ventured to remain in occupation of their own allotments, were afraid to have it known that they had in their possession any of the produce of their own fields. All this while it does not appear that there was any open war, or any military operations. The invaders bore all

she seems to have the very plunder in her immediate possession; she pauses and contemplates every particular. To add to the beauty of this passage, there is also an uncommon neatness in the versification; great force, accuracy, and perspicuity in the diction; and the utmost elegance in the repetitions, which, notwithstanding their apparent redundancy, are conducted with the most perfect brevity. In the end, the fatal disappointment of female hope and credulity, tacitly insinuated by the unexpected apostrophe,—

'So let thine enemies perish, O Jehovah!'

is expressed more forcibly by this very silence of the person who was just speaking, than it could possibly have been by all the powers of language."—LOWTH.

before them, and had entirely their own way, by the mere force of the intimidating impressions which their numbers created. Countries or districts bordering on the desert are still subject to similar visitations, where the local government is not strong enough to prevent them, or where the pre-occupation of the border soil by Arabs in the state of semi-cultivators, does not form an obstacle (as it does not so always) to the incursions of pure Bedouins. Down to a very recent date the very country east of the Jordan, which suffered the most on the present occasion, suffered much from the periodical sojourn and severe exactions of the Bedouin tribes.

These incursions of the Midianites were repeated for seven years. By this time the oppression had become so heavy that the Israelites, finding by bitter experience the insufficiency of all other help, cried to Him who had delivered them of old: their cry was heard. A prophet was commissioned to point out to them that their disobedience had been the cause of their sufferings, and to give to them the promise of a new deliverance.

The hero this time appointed to act for the deliverance of Israel, was Gideon of Manasseh. His family was exposed to the general suffering occasioned by the presence of the Bedouin tribes,—so much so, that having retained possession of some corn, they dared not thresh it out for use in the ordinary threshing-floor, but, to conceal it from the knowledge or suspicion of the invaders, were obliged to perform this operation silently and secretly, in so unusual a place as the vineyard, near the wine-press. The threshing-floors were watched by the Midianites at this time, when the harvests had been gathered in; but no regard was paid to the vineyards, as the season of ripe grapes was far off. Gideon was engaged in this service when "the angel of Jehovah" appeared to him standing under an oak which grew there. When apprised of his vocation to deliver Israel, the modest husbandman would have excused himself on the ground of his wanting that eminence of station which so important a service appeared to demand; and when silenced by the emphatic "I will be with thee" from his heavenly visitant, he still sought to have some certain tokens whereby he might feel assured, and be enabled to convey the assurance to others, that his call was indeed from God. Accordingly, a succession of signal miracles were wrought to satisfy his mind, and to confirm his faith. The refection of kid's-flesh and bread, which the hospitable Gideon quickly got ready for the stranger, was, as he directed, laid upon a rock before him, and when he touched it with the end of his staff, a spontaneous fire arose by which it was consumed, as a sacrifice, and at the same time the stranger disappeared. After this, at the special desire of Gideon, "a sign" of his own choosing was granted to him. A fleece which he laid upon the threshing-floor (in the open air) was saturated with dew, while the soil around was all dry; and again, condescending to his prayer, the Lord was pleased to reverse this miracle, by exempting the fleece alone from the dewy moisture which bespread the ground: Gideon was satisfied.

Yet the family from which the deliverer was chosen, was not less tainted by the sins than visited by the punishments of Israel; for Joash, the father of Gideon, had erected an altar to Baal, at Ophrah, the town of his residence, at which the people of that place rendered their idolatrous services to that idol. This altar Gideon was directed to destroy, and in its place to erect, over the rock on which his offering had been consumed, an altar to Jehovah. It would seem that Joash himself was brought back to his fealty to Jehovah by the first of the miracles we have related, of which, probably, Gideon was not the sole witness: for when the men of Ophrah, early in the following morning, arose to render their worship to Baal, and, finding his altar overthrown, demanded the death of Gideon, his father stood forward to vindicate his conduct. He undauntedly retorted the sentence of death against the idolaters themselves, for their apostacy from Jehovah. By demanding the punishment of Gideon for his act against Baal, they recognised in fact the fairness of the punishments denounced by the law against those individuals or cities which turned away from Jehovah to serve other gods; and this, coupled with the derision of Joash at the impotency of Baal to vindicate or avenge his own cause, so wrought upon the people of that place, that they were among the foremost to gather to him when he sounded the trumpet of war. He then sent messengers throughout

his own tribe of Manasseh, (on both sides the Jordan,) as well as through those of Asher, Naphtali, and Zebulon. And so cheerfully was the call obeyed that Gideon soon found himself at the head of 32,000 men. With this force Gideon marched to the mountains of Gilboa, where he found vast multitudes of the enemy encamped before him in the plain of Esdraelon. This fine plain had probably been before their favourite resort; but they seem to have congregated there in unusual numbers as soon as they heard of Gideon's preparations. And now that the people might have no cause to attribute their deliverance to their own numbers and prowess, it pleased the Divine king of Israel to reduce this important army to a mere handful of spirited men. In the first place Gideon was directed to proclaim liberty for all who now, in sight of the enemy, were fearful and faint-hearted, to return to their own homes. This proclamation, according to the law,* ought in all cases to have been made; but it seems that from some reason or other (perhaps either from ignorance of the law, or from supposing that it was not intended to apply to such a case as the present), it would not have been made by Gideon without the special command which he received. Such a law, or practice, however inapplicable, or even ruinous it might prove under the military systems and tactics of modern Europe, was well calculated to act beneficially in the warfare of those early times; for as everything then depended on the individual courage and prowess of those engaged, "the faint-hearted" were more likely to damage than assist those on whose side they appeared; as their conduct was tolerably certain to bring about results fatal to themselves, and discouraging to their more valorous companions. In the present instance the result was, that, although the men composing the army of Gideon had come forward voluntarily, above two-thirds of them were so intimidated in the actual presence of danger, that they took advantage of this permission to depart to their own homes. Of the 32,000, only 10,000 remained with Gideon. Yet as these were men of valour, as evinced by their determination to remain, room for vain-glorious boastings was still left, and therefore Gideon was informed that the number was still too large, and that a further reduction must be made. The process of this second selection was very curious. All those were dismissed who, in drinking at the watering-place, stooped down to drink in large draughts of water at the surface; but those who merely "lapped" the water, or took it up in the hollow of their hands to drink, were retained. The different methods of drinking has been supposed to have distinguished the self-indulgent from the more manly and active men. The latter—those who took up the water in their hollowed hands—were but 300 out of the 10,000; and these were declared sufficient for the enterprise.

The night after this, Gideon, with his faithful follower Phurah, went down to the camp of the enemy, in consequence of an intimation that he would there hear matter for his encouragement. What he heard was one soldier, just awakened, telling a dream to his companions. He had dreamed that he saw a barley-cake roll down from the hills to the Midianitish camp, where it overthrew the first tent to which it came. The interpretation which the other gave was:—"This is none other than the sword of Gideon, the son of Joash, a man of Israel, into whose hand God delivereth Midian and the whole camp."

Several facts are indicated by this incident; such as the stress generally laid upon dreams in that age, as indicative of contingent results,—the honour attached to the office of spy, as one of danger, and which was, therefore, as in the Mosaic age, assigned to, or undertaken by the very chief persons in the army,—and the truly Oriental want of sentinels and pickets, even in the face of the enemy. This indeed may have been noticed on many former occasions; and to this astonishing neglect of a precaution which seems to us so obvious and so simple, may be attribute the facility and success of those sudden surprises of which we so often read in the military history of those early ages.

Gideon no sooner heard the dream and its interpretation than he understood and accepted the sign. He returned to his own small band, and proceeded to carry into immediate execution a remarkable stratagem which had already been suggested to him. He divided his 300 men into three companies. Every man was provided with a trumpet in one hand, and in the other

* Deut. xx. 8.

a pitcher containing a lighted lamp. They were then stationed in silence and darkness at different points on the outside of the enemy's camp. Then, on a signal given by Gideon



[Egyptian Pitchers.]

all the three companies, at the same instant, blew their trumpets, exposed their lamps, broke the pitchers which had concealed them, and then continued shouting, "The sword of Jehovah and of Gideon!"* The terrible din and crash which thus suddenly broke in upon the stillness of midnight, with the equally sudden blaze of light from three hundred lamps, which illumined its darkness, struck an instant panic into the vast host of Midian, suggesting to them that the lamp-bearing trumpeters (whose numbers must have been greatly magnified in the confused apprehension of men just awakened) were but the advanced guard of the Hebrew host whom they were lighting to the attack on the camp. They therefore fled in all directions, through the openings between the three companies. In their midnight flight, not doubting that the Hebrews had fallen upon them, they mistook friends for foes, and vast multitudes of them perished by each other's swords. The survivors, in their further flight, came up with the several parties which had been dismissed by Gideon to their homes, and these committed a terrible slaughter among the fugitives. Gideon also sent messengers desiring the Ephraimites to seize the various fords of the Jordan, between the two lakes, and thereby prevent the escape of any of the fugitives eastward, which was the direction they would naturally take. In this terrible overthrow no less than 120,000 of the various tribes of "the children of the east" perished; and so completely were the Midianites subdued that from that time they were never able "to lift up their heads any more."

A remnant of 15,000, headed by their emirs, Zebah and Zalmunna, managed to escape across the river (probably before the Ephraimites had seized the fords), and having reached a distance where they deemed themselves safe from further pursuit, they ventured to encamp. But Gideon himself, with his faithful 300, continued the pursuit even to that distance—even into the land of the tent-dwellers—and falling suddenly upon the camp, which lay carelessly

* The hint of this watchword was taken from the interpretation of the Midianitish soldier's dream "the sword of Gideon," to which Gideon, with equal piety and modesty, prefixed, "the sword of Jehovah."

secure, the already scared Midianites were completely overthrown. The two emirs themselves were taken alive and brought before Gideon. He had formed, for those times, the singularly generous intention to spare their lives; but when he gathered, from their own lips, that they had created a case of blood-revenge between himself and them, by putting to death, near Mount Tabor, his brethren, "*the sons of his own mother*," * he, as the legal avenger of their blood, slew these emirs with his own hand.

Gideon seems to have been a man eminently qualified for the high and difficult station to which he was called. Firm even to sternness, where the exhibition of the stronger qualities seemed necessary, and in war "a mighty man of valour,"—we are called upon in his case, more frequently than in any other which has occurred, to admire his truly courteous and self-retreating character, and that nice and difficult tact—difficult, because spontaneously *natural* —in the management of men, which is a rarer and finer species of judgment, and by which he was intuitively taught to say the properest word, and do the properest deed at the most proper time. This is the true secret of his ultimate popularity and influence, which much exceeded that enjoyed by any judge before him. Some instances of the qualities which we have indicated have already appeared, and others will presently occur.

The Ephraimites who had guarded the Jordan, having performed all that their duty required, hastened to join Gideon in the pursuit of the Midianites. They met him on his return, and laid before him the heads of Oreb and Zeeb,† two emirs of Midian whom they had taken and slain. This tribe of Ephraim, which was, after that of Judah, the most important in Israel, was exceedingly jealous of its superiority; and was therefore not a little annoyed that an obscure Abiezrite should have undertaken so great an enterprise as that now happily completed, without consulting them. They now took occasion to remonstrate with him sharply on the subject, but were soon pacified by his modest and good-tempered answer. "How little have I done now in comparison with you," he said. "Is not *the gleaning* of the grapes of Ephraim better than *the vintage* of Abiezer? God hath delivered up the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb; and what have I been able to do in comparison with you?" Gideon knew what Solomon taught long after, "A soft answer turneth away wrath."

When he had crossed the Jordan in pursuit of the fugitives, he was anxious to obtain for his small band—"faint yet pursuing"—refreshments from the town of Succoth, which he passed, and afterwards from that of Peniel; but he was in both cases refused. The inhabitants seem to have been fearful of bringing upon themselves the vengeance of the Midianites, to whom they had for seven years been subject, and against whom they held it to be very unlikely that he would succeed with so small a force. They not only refused, but added insult to injury. Instead of chastising them on the spot, he coolly told both that he would do so on his return; and he now kept his promise. Coming upon Succoth by surprise, before the sun was up, he took the chief persons of Succoth, and, as he had threatened, scourged them to death with thorns and briars. Of Peniel he made a still severer example, for he beat down the fortress-tower of that city, and put to death the men belonging to it.

The Israelites, in the warmth of their gratitude, offered to make Gideon their king, and to continue the crown to his descendants. This proposal, which clearly shows how unmindful the Israelites had become of the great political principle of the theocracy, with which they were so unwarrantably ready to dispense, was nobly rejected by Gideon, who replied to it in the true spirit of the theocracy,—"I will not reign over you, neither shall my son reign over you; Jehovah, he shall reign over you." But while thus alive to the true political character of the Mosaic institutions, he was not equally cognisant of the religious obligations of that system. When he was called to his great work at Ophrah, he had been instructed to build an altar on the rock on which his offering had been accepted, and himself to offer sacrifices there. This probably led him to conclude that it would be right to form a religious establish-

* The emphasis lies in the probability that his father had children by other wives than Gideon's mother. To be *her* children, therefore, constituted a far dearer tie than to be his *father's* children in the general sense.

† The names mean Crow and Wolf. It would seem that the chiefs of the Midianites (like the North American Indians) took the names of animals, as significant of qualities to which they aspired.

ment at that spot, for the worship of God by sacrifice. A more perfect acquaintance with the principles of the law would have taught him otherwise. However, to this object he applied the produce of the golden ear-rings * of the Midianites, which, at his special request (not unlike that of Aaron, Exod. xxxii. 2), were cheerfully granted to him by the army as his share of the spoil. The weight being 1700 shekels, the gold thus obtained must have been worth upwards of 3000*l.* of our money ; and the "ephod" which he is described as having made with it, probably included not only "the priests' dress," as the word signifies, but a regular sacerdotal establishment in his own town, where sacrifices might be constantly offered. For this purpose such a sum as he applied to it must have been fully requisite. It has been disputed whether Gideon himself officiated as priest, or, like Micah, engaged a Levite for that purpose. The latter seems the more likely supposition, unless from having been once directed to offer sacrifice, Gideon concluded he had a superior claim to discharge that office.

However well intended this establishment may have been in the first instance, this was a most mistaken and dangerous step, resembling, in its principle, the establishment which the Danites had formed in the north. It infringed upon the peculiar claims of Shiloh, the seat of the Divine Presence; and the result of these and all attempts to form separate establishments affords ample illustration of the design with which the formal worship of God by sacrifice was confined to one particular locality. It proved "a snare to Gideon and his family," in worshipping the true God in an improper manner. It became popular to "all Israel," who resorted to Ophrah to render that worship and service which was due only at the sacred tabernacle; and, with the predisposition to idolatry, it is not wonderful that, free at this place from the restraint and supervision which the worship at Shiloh imposed, the service at this place soon became associated with idolatrous ideas and objects, until at last it degenerated into rank idolatry after the death of Gideon. He survived and ruled Israel forty years after his victory over the Midianites, and during all this time the tranquillity of Israel appears to have been undisturbed.

NOTE ON ANCIENT WARFARE.

(1) Barbarities of Ancient Warfare, p. 367.—As occasion offered, we have endeavoured to set in what we believe to be a right point of view, the various war practices of ancient times, particularly the more barbarous portion of them. We shall, therefore, confine our present attention to the point more particularly suggested by the text, which is, that the Hebrews were not, with respect to such practices, worse, if as bad, as their neighbours; and that they meted out to those whom they conquered no other measure than they would themselves have received had their enemies prevailed. This argument does not abstractedly *justify* the practices. On *abstract* principles war itself is unjustifiable and monstrous. But we conceive it brings the matter to this point,—that when practices which we now abhor were generally prevalent at some former time, we have no right—it would not be just—to make one particular nation the special subject of our reprobation on that account. Our censure should be as general as the practices themselves were. Considerations of this tendency have already been submitted to the reader, and a few more may be very suitably connected with the incident to the account of which the present note is appended. Had no further explanation been given, the act of the Hebrew victors in cutting off the thumbs and great-toes of their royal captive, would have been cited (as other acts not similarly explained have been) as a deed of motiveless and savage barbarity, attesting the innate cruelty of their nature. But when the person thus treated himself lets us know that he regards it as an act of retributive justice,—and when, thus himself mutilated, the bitter remembrance comes before him of the three score and ten kings who were similarly dealt with by him, and whom, with barbaric pride, he kept to gather their meat under his table,—the case as regards the Israelites is

greatly altered. So far from being a barbarity of their invention, gratuitous and uncalled for, they depart from their ordinary practice to render an act of poetical justice, and thereby expressed in no equivocal terms their detestation of the manner in which this tyrannical king had been wont to treat the illustrious persons who became captive to him.

In speaking about contemporary usages, however, it will be necessary to guard against one dangerous source of misconception. Except with reference to the times in which we ourselves live, we are in the habit of *practically* forgetting that contemporary nations are not necessarily in the same state of civilization; and there are classes of usages, especially such as are connected with war, which, as existing in any one nation, will be much better illustrated, or rather estimated, by the practices of any other nations in a similar state with respect to civilization, *in whatever age existing*, than by references to the usages of contemporary or even neighbouring nations.

It is a sad truth to tell, but, being truth, it may be told, that the diminution of the barbarities of war which advancing civilization produces, is less the effect of humane feeling than of the interested considerations which advancing civilization evolves. The savage has *no interest* in being merciful, and therefore—unless by a fortunate accident—he has no mercy. His war is a war of extermination. As in other cases, his object is to injure or disable the enemy as much as possible, and he knows no way of doing this but by destroying as many as possible of their number. His glory is to accumulate the mortal trophies of those he has slain. He gives no quarter nor expects to receive it; and if he does take prisoners, it is only that they may in some future day of triumphant festival, taste with tenfold intensity all "the bitterness of death." The reason of this is, that he has no use for their lives, and the only motive which prevents him from destroying them on the spot is—that he may eat them, or that he may offer them in sacrifice to his grim idols.

Then, as a nation becomes settled, and cultivates the arts which belong to settled life, it finds that man has such value, as a labouring or serving animal, as to make his life worth preserving. The captives are therefore spared for the labour of slaves; and this, too, because the settled state of life, while it affords occasion for their being employed to the profit of their owners, so fixes them as to render escape a matter of difficulty. Under this state of things, however, interest will suggest the advantage of allowing the captive to be ransomed by his friends, if communications can be opened with them, and if the sum which they can offer exceeds the value which the captor sets upon his services. A savage could not preserve his prisoner without encumbering himself with the charge of his subsistence. So much does this principle of interest speak to all men, that the savage, who has not himself any use for the bond-services of his captive, and therefore destroys him, will preserve his life if there are facilities for making a profit of him by selling him to those by whom his services may be needed. If also, without any such facilities, the prisoner be a person of consequence (and especially if he belongs to a condition of civilization different from that of the captors), the savage will preserve his life if he has the prospect of a valuable ransom—*but no longer* than that prospect is entertained.

Under this state of things, kings and chiefs, if they have the misfortune to be taken prisoners, are generally exposed to a peculiar treatment, by reason of the active and leading part which their position had obliged them to take against their present conquerors. Sometimes we shall find that they are put to death, and that in cold blood, and with circumstances of ignominy, weeks or months after the conflict has been decided. Oftener they are subjected to some mutilation, and are obliged to render menial and ignominious services to their conqueror, whose pride is exalted by himself and household being served by fallen kings and princes, queens and princesses.

In a still more improved condition of society, where the disadvantages of an act of warfare are generally less unequal than in the savage or semi-civilised conditions, prisoners are taken on both sides; and as both consider that the presence of their own citizens and soldiers is of more advantage than the services of foreign slaves, an exchange of prisoners is the result. If, under these circumstances, a king or chief person should become a prisoner, he obtains his liberty either for a high ransom, or by exchange against one or more persons of the highest rank, or by the cession of some advantage to the captors. The highest state of civilization possible while war exists seem to be indicated by the liberation of officers (even of high rank) acting under orders, upon their parole engagement, not again during the war to fight against their captors.

The condition of society, as indicated by war, described in this last paragraph, is not to be found in any ancient nation, although parts of it might now and then be brought out by some accident.

We have entered into this statement because

the true question as to the war practices of the Hebrews is nothing more or less than this,—Whether their practices in war did or did not correspond with the progressive developments of their national condition? not,—Whether in the *first* stage of their social progression they had the war usages which are found only in the *last?* This last question involves an expectation which cannot with any show of reason be entertained, but which nevertheless lies at the bottom of most of the objections which have been made to the war-practices of the Israelites.

Now in answer to the question which we have proposed, we have not the least hesitation in declaring our conviction that the practices of the Hebrews, *as regards the treatment of prisoners* (which is the trying point in the larger question), were not only not worse, but not as bad as those of other nations in the same state of civilization. It would be almost unnecessary to state that in the long period over which the history of the Hebrew people extends, they passed through various states of civilization, were it not that we constantly hear talk of "the customs of the Hebrews" in such sort as to convey the impression that the practices which we find among that people at any one period were common to all periods, whereas the obvious fact is, that their social condition was progressive, like that of all other nations; and that, as time passed, many old customs were relinquished, and many new ones came into use.

During the time in which the Hebrews were engaged in the conquest of Canaan, and were well settled in that country—that is, down to the time of King David—they were in a condition very similar, as respects war, to that which we have first described, while the settled nations around them were for the most part in that condition which has been secondly described. And yet it will be found that during this period the usages of the Hebrews were far above those of the first condition; but were in many respects equal to, and in some respects above those of the second condition—and this through the corrective which their religious system applied to the principles of warfare which naturally belonged to their condition.

During the period of which we now write, the Hebrews *had no interest* in preserving the lives of their prisoners. The conquest of the country being incomplete, they were themselves rather pressed at times for room; and their operations in agriculture and pasturage were of too contracted and simple a description to need more hands than the family and its natural dependants afforded. There was no market open to them in which they could sell their prisoners for slaves had they been so inclined. And as the nations with which they warred were their near neighbours, they could not employ them with any profit to themselves without affording them the means of escape. In short it was impossible that they could have kept them without incurring the cost of their maintenance, which no ancient nation ever did. Under such circumstances no prisoners were taken. Those who could, escaped; and those who could not, were slain, either on the field of battle or in the pursuit. In fact there were no surrenders or capitulations of bodies of men, no laying down of arms, by which prisoners are obtained in modern warfare. No prisoners were ever reserved to be tortured and slain in cold blood on some future occasion. It is true that one or two instances of prisoners being put to death after the act of warfare, do occur—such as that of the Midianites* and of king Agag:† but these were not preserved with the view of their being subsequently destroyed; but they were put to death because they had without authority been spared by the military commanders, although the nation had *before the battle* devoted them, by a solemn and irrevocable ban, to destruction—for reasons which were for that time considered good, and were such as would have led other nations to similar acts of devotement.

In the case of those kings who were taken in the course of the battle, and were put to death *on the same day*, at its close, this cannot be called cold blooded. It was a crowning act of triumph and vengeance, while the blood of the victors, maddened by the recent conflict, still boiled in their veins. At the worst, this was the most barbarous practice of the Hebrews in their most barbarous state; and was of far less atrocity than the acts towards their distinguished prisoners, of nations far in advance of the Israelites of these times, in general civilization—if indeed there be any true civilization by which *the heart* is not civilized. Thus the heathen attributed, to some extent, the victories which they achieved to the might and blessing of their gods: therefore, in acknowledging the obligation to these gods, prisoners were, by some of them, preserved to be offered to these gods in sacrifice, on some high holiday; but from this, and from a hundred other barbarities connected with or arising from this form of acknowledgment, the Hebrews were precluded by the strict prohibition of human sacrifices, as a thing most abhorrent to Jehovah. Yet no nation was more perseveringly taught than the Hebrews that the

* Num. xxxi 13—17. † 1 Sam. xv. 32, 33.

glory of all their victories was to be ascribed to their Divine King; and this made the agents of these victories, the generals, judges, and kings, heedful that they might not seem to take too large a share of the glory to themselves, by ostentatious exhibitions of their triumphs. No royal and noble captives were dragged in chains at their chariot wheels; none were allowed to live on, to be paraded in distant cities to mark the triumph of the conqueror, and afterwards ignominiously slain; none were ever blinded or mutilated by them, or exposed to mockery and insult; nor were any ever kept by them to grind in the prison-house, or to gather meat under their tables: not even Solomon in all his glory thought of the vulgar ambition of having dethroned kings among the menials of his house; and if "kings' daughters were among the honourable women" * of his Egyptian spouse, they were given to her by her father rather than her husband, and, after all, they were "honourable (not degraded) women."

The custom among the Hebrews of slaying the kings of a conquered people upon the field of battle was, after all, of only momentary duration. It had already so far declined in the time of Gideon that he would have spared Zeba and Zalmunna had not they, by putting his brothers to death, rendered the case one of blood-revenge. And although Agag was put to death at a much later period, that was a peculiar case, to which we have already adverted. And after having relinquished this practice, they resorted to none of these intermediate barbarities of which we have spoken. Captive kings came to be treated with consideration and even kindness; and for the most part, when not slain in battle, were continued in the rule of their territories on the condition of paying tribute. The Hebrews also, within as short or a shorter time than any other people, ceased to wage exterminative wars. With an enlarged territory and increased means of employment, it became their interest to take and preserve captives for the sake of the services which they might render in the public works and in the fields. There may be exceptions, and examples of gratuitous barbarities; but what history is there, even modern history, in which such do not occur?

That the Egyptians were, in the period of which our history now treats, far, very far, above the Hebrews in all the arts of civil life, it would be very useless to dissemble or dispute. It has therefore occurred to us that we cannot better conclude this note than by showing that in this comparatively advanced state of that people, when captive labour had become valuable to them, they still retained barbarous war usages which were not known to the Hebrews in their most barbarous state, much less in that more civilized condition which they afterwards attained. The illustration derivable from this source is the more important, inasmuch as, from their long residence in Egypt they could hardly be unacquainted with the war-usages of that country, and the difference cannot well be accounted for but by reference to the different circumstances in which they were placed, and the entirely different *principles* of their religion and government.

We are aware that Sir J. G. Wilkinson has thrown an obstacle in our way at the outset, by contending that all the barbarities which the Egyptian sculptures offer to our view are to be understood as allegorical, or as symbolical fancies of the sculptors. And why? Because he "cannot suppose that the Egyptians, who surpassed all others in the practices of civilised life, were in the habit of indulging in wanton cruelty." Now we have the highest respect for the opinions of this gentleman on the subject of Egyptian Antiquities, which few persons living have studied with as much diligence or to as good purpose. But such a matter as this is one on which every reflecting person, acquainted with history and the principles of human conduct, is as competent as the most laborious student of Egyptian antiquities to form an opinion—perhaps more so, as being less likely to have his judgment distorted by that partisanship which is so often engendered by an exclusive study. So here, for one particular purpose—to redeem the Egyptians from a charge impossible otherwise to refute—a system of allegorical interpretation is applied to the historical sculptures, which is calculated to have a most discouraging effect upon the whole study. One who believes these things to be allegories and symbols, cannot deny that other matters may be the same; and this being conceded, what becomes of their value as historical monuments? and who shall draw the limit between the real and the ideal? There can be none. Every one will interpret that to be ideal which he does not like to believe real. The argument itself, on which this interpretation is founded, is of very little weight. The Egyptians may have been a very humane people among themselves; but their hatred of foreigners is historically known, and of course those with whom they warred, and whom they took captive, were foreigners. Besides, although the Romans also "surpassed in the practices of civil life," who ever thought of denying the

* See Psa. xlv. 9; attributed to Solomon.

wanton cruelties of which they were habitually guilty? The fact is that the true civilisation of the heart has no inevitable connection with or dependence on "the arts of civil life;" and we forget history if we think that it has. However, we will not argue the matter further; but, by the help of Dr. Richardson, who took things in their obvious sense, and of Sir J. G. Wilkinson* himself before his allegorical explanations had been started, we will proceed to describe some of the scenes which the sculptures most abundantly offer.

An admirable representation of a battle-field is found on the walls of the pronaos of the great temple at Medinet Habou.—"The south and part of the east wall is covered with a battle-scene, and the cruel punishment of the vanquished, by cutting off their hands and maiming their bodies, which is performed in the presence of the chief, who has seated himself in repose on the back part of his chariot to witness the execution of his horrid sentence. Three heaps of amputated hands † are counted over before him, and an equal number of scribes with scrolls in their hands are minuting down the account. As many rows of prisoners stand behind, to undergo a similar mutilation in their turn; their hands are tied behind their backs, or lashed over their heads, or thrust into eye-shaped manacles,‡ some of their heads are twisted completely round, some of them are turned back to back, and their arms lashed together round the elbows; and thus they are marched up to punishment."§ Now we are prepared to admit that Richardson has here taken rather too strong a view of the case. We believe with Wilkinson that the heaps of hands, tongues, and *other members*, counted by the scribes in the presence of the king, are taken from the slain enemies, whose numbers they serve to authenticate. However the particular manner in which the dead are mutilated for this purpose, does not say much for the humanity of idea among the Egyptians. There was no such practice among the Hebrews; and the not remarkably humane nation (the Turks), which has retained to our own day an analogous practice, does not go further than to cut off *the right ears* of the slain.

The strained and torturing postures, painful to behold, in which the prisoners are bound, seems to us, as it does to Richardson, a very unequivocal intimation of the inhuman manner in which the Egyptians treated their captives. Wilkinson allows that, "To judge from the

* In his 'Egypt and Thebes.'

† See the cut at p. 368. ‡ See the cut at 367.

§ See all this in the first cut at p. 367.

mode of binding their prisoners, *we might suppose* they treated them with unnecessary harshness, and even cruelty, at the moment of their capture and during their march with the army."* He also admits that the Egyptian hatred of foreigners might often lead the soldiers to commit acts of brutal severity, but excuses them by reference to the incidental brutalities of the armies of civilised Europe. This excuse is as good for the Hebrews, and even better, as they were a less "civilised" people. But, in fact, the brutalities of the Egyptians were not *incidents* but *usages*. Nations do not perpetuate in marble the memory of incidental barbarities which they deplore; and that the Egyptians delighted in images of human suffering and tyrannic power over strangers, is proved by the multiplication of such images in every possible form,—not only in sculpture and painting, but as figured on their official dresses, and wrought in their ornamental furniture. Scenes of immolation figure on their thrones; and their more splendid chairs present, as supporters of the seat, the gilt or golden images of captives, bound in the most painful postures, with ropes around their necks. To the thinking mind this last circumstance will appear much more conclusive than many facts of much greater intrinsic importance.

The return after victory is represented in the continuation of the same historical piece to which the preceding observations refer:—"The king returning victorious to Egypt, proceeds slowly in his car, conducting in triumph the prisoners he has made, who walk (bound as above) beside and before it, *three others being bound to the axle*.......He arrives at Thebes, and presents his captives to Amunre and Maut, the deities of the city, who compliment him, as usual, on the victory he has gained, and the overthrow of the enemy he has 'trampled beneath his feet.'" † The victorious king trampling upon the bodies of his conquered foes frequently occurs in such scenes; and so fond were the Egyptians of the ideas and images connected with this act, that they were wont to have the figure of a slave or captive wrought upon their sandals, that they might thus tread it under feet. Sandals thus figured have been found.

In some cases the king or chief alights from his chariot to bind with his own hand the chiefs he has conquered, and in others he holds himself the end of the rope around their necks whereby they are led, or rather driven, before his chariot in his triumphal march.

* 'Ancient Egyptians,' i. 396.

† 'Egypt and Thebes,' 67.

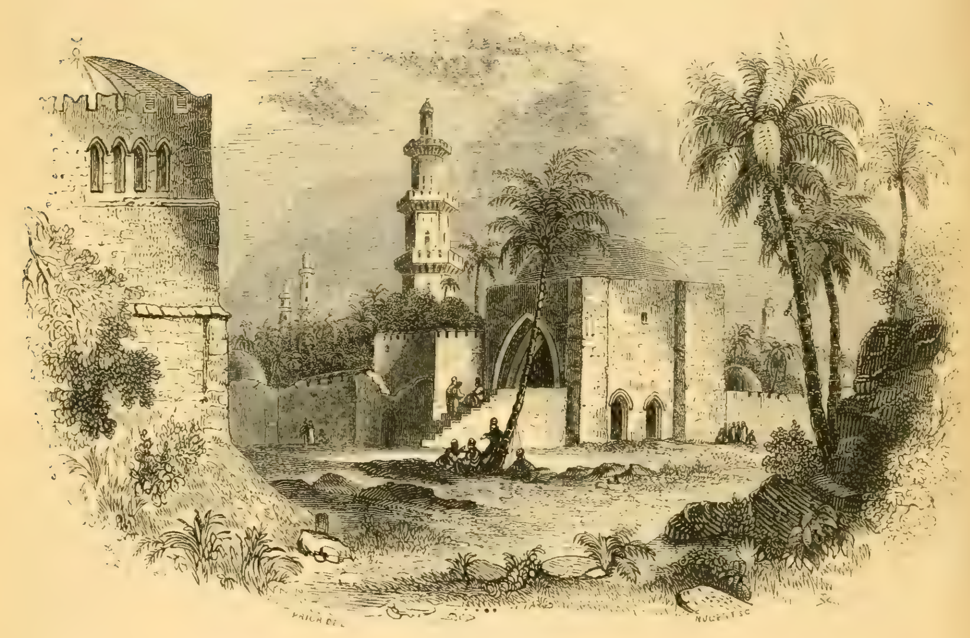
As a conclusion to the whole of these scenes, the hero slays with his club, in the presence of his gods, the principal captives who have fallen into his hands. That the mode of representation is in some respects symbolical, or rather *conventional,* must be admitted. For as the artists wanted space or ingenuity to intimate the number slain before the gods in any other manner, the captives are represented as bound together in one mass, all on their knees, with hands uplifted towards the inexorable hero, who, represented in colossal proportions, stands over them, grasping in one hand their united hair, while the other wields the uplifted club or battle-axe with which he seems about to demolish them all with one blow. A scene of this sort is repeated in every possible form. On one of them Dr. Richardson remarks, "The figure is that of a hero, finely sketched, young, vigorous, and colossal. In his left hand he holds a hatchet, poised in an attitude to strike, while the right hand grasps the hair of thirty miserable victims. To look at his countenance, it is placid and benign, and so far removed from the gathering blackness of cruelty, you would say that with his hatchet he was going to hew asunder the fetters with which they were bound, and set them at liberty; but when you see the unfortunate wretches crouching and shivering under his arm, you feel that nothing less than their destruction is intended."

Of course, endeavours have been made to explain away the obvious meaning of these groups. Mr. Hamilton thinks such scenes represent the punishment or destruction of Briareus, an opinion sufficiently refuted by the fact that a woman is included in one of the groups of this description: and it is admitted by Wilkinson that they are foreign captives, the names of whose districts and towns can be read off; but he nevertheless thinks they do not represent human sacrifices, but form a religious allegory, purporting to be an acknowledgment of the victory obtained by the assistance of the deity to whom the offering seems to be made. If so, this would be a curious method of expressing such acknowledgment; and a method, too, which would, at least, express the former existence, in a less civilised state, of the actual custom thus figuratively intimated. But we have, perhaps, said enough before about those allegorical interpretations: and even if we relinquished the illustration of our argument which is derivable from the scenes to which these considerations refer, there are others, to which this allegorical hypothesis has not been and cannot be by any possibility assigned, which prove beyond question that the Egyptians did immolate human victims to their gods; and this being the case, it ceases to be worth the while of any one to contend that the groups which have engaged our attention do not represent the immolation of foreign captives to the gods whose favour was supposed to have given the victory to the conquerors. Undoubtedly the Egyptians made slaves of the mass of their captives; and we may conclude that those whom they selected for immolation were such as had been most active against them in the concluded war.

We have purposely touched but slightly on this last part of the question, as it resolves itself into the subject of human sacrifice, to which it is our intention to devote a separate note in a future page.

CHAPTER III.

FROM GIDEON TO SAMSON.



[Gaza.]

Gideon left no less than seventy sons by his numerous wives, besides one spurious son called Abimelech, by a concubine (whom Josephus calls Drumah) who belonged to Shechem. A bastard among seventy legitimate sons was not likely to be pleasantly circumstanced when his father was dead, and it is not surprising that he soon withdrew from among them to his mother's relations at Shechem. They seem to have been persons of some consideration in that place.

After the death of Gideon, the history, without stating the fact, seems to require us to suppose that his sons had been invited to take the government, or to share it among them; and that they, actuated by the same noble, because disinterested, regard for the principles of the theocracy which had influenced their father, had declined the offer. But Abimelech, "a bold, bad man," was of a different spirit. He soon saw the advantage which he might take of the existing posture of affairs. Prompted by him, his uncles and other maternal connections suggested to the chief people of Shechem his willingness to undertake the charge which the people generally were anxious to see in the hands of a son, or some of the sons, of Gideon. They suggested whether it were not much better that one man should reign over them, than

* See p. 324, and the cut there.

that they should be subject to all the sons of Gideon, seventy persons in number; and if the government of one man was to be desired, who had so strong a claim to *their* preference and attachment as one so closely connected with them as Abimelech? These suggestions had their weight upon the leading men of Shechem, particularly the consideration that he was "their brother." They supplied him with money out of the treasury of Baal-berith, whose worship seems to have been that to which the Israelites were at this time the most inclined. The sum was not large,* but it served him to hire a set of unprincipled men, prepared for any undertaking he might propose. And, with the usual short-sightedness of wicked men, thinking to concentrate in his own person the attachment of the Israelites to the house of Gideon, as well as to extinguish that which was likely to be the most active opposition he would have to encounter, Abimelech marched his troop to Ophrah, where he put to death all his brethren, the sons of Gideon, with the exception of the youngest, named Jotham, who managed to escape. This is the first example of a stroke of barbarous policy which has since been very common in the history of the East. In the first instance it had the effect he intended, for on his return to Shechem the people of that place assembled and anointed Abimelech king, close to a pillar of stone that stood near that town, perhaps the same which Joshua had set up there as a memorial of the covenant with God.

When Jotham was made acquainted with this, he repaired secretly to the neighbourhood of Shechem, and taking advantage of some festival which brought the inhabitants together outside the town, he appeared suddenly on a cliff overlooking the valley in which they were assembled, and, in a loud voice, called their attention to his words. He then delivered that earliest and very fine parable, which represents the trees as making choice of a king:—The olive refused to leave its oil, the fig-tree its sweetness, and the vine-tree its wine, to reign over the trees (thus intimating the refusal of Gideon's sons); but the upstart bramble (representing Abimelech) accepts, with great dignity, the offered honour, and even proposes the conditions of its acceptance. These are exquisitely satirical, both in their terms and in their application—"If ye truly intend to anoint me king over you, come, take shelter under my shadow; and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon." That they might be at no loss to understand his meaning, Jotham gave the obvious "moral," in which he included a bitter rebuke of the ingratitude of the people to their deliverer, all whose sons, save himself, they had slain; together with an intimation, which proved prophetic, of the probable result. He then fled with all haste, in fear of Abimelech; and ultimately settled beyond his reach, at Beer, in the tribe of Benjamin.

Abimelech reigned three years in Shechem, during which he so disgusted the men by whom he had been raised to that bad eminence on which he stood, that they expelled him from their city. In return, he, with the aid of the desperate fellows who remained with him, did his utmost to distress the inhabitants, so that at the season of vintage they were afraid to go out into their vineyards to collect their fruits. Hearing of these transactions, one Gaal went over to Shechem with his armed followers and kinsmen, to see how they might be turned to his advantage. We know not precisely who this person was, or whence he came; but there are circumstances in the original narrative which would suggest that he was a Canaanite, descended from the former rulers of Shechem, and that his people also were a remnant of the original Shechemites. He came so opportunely, that the people very gladly accepted his protection during the vintage. In the feasts which followed the joyful labours of that season, Gaal, who seems to have been a cowardly, boasting fellow, spoke contemptuously of Abimelech, and talked largely of what he could and would do, if authority were vested in him. This was heard with much indignation by Zebul, one of the principal magistrates of the city, who lost no time in secretly sending to apprise Abimelech how matters stood, and advised him to show himself suddenly before the city, when he would undertake to induce Gaal to march out against him. Accordingly one morning, when Zebul and other principal persons were with Gaal at the gate of the city, armed men were seen descending the hills. Zebul amused Gaal till

* Seventy shekels of silver, about equal to eight pounds of our money. But proper allowance must be made for a great difference in the real value of money, although the precise amount of that difference cannot be stated.

they came nearer, and then, by reminding him of his recent boastings, compelled him to draw out his men to repel the advance of Abimelech. They met, and no sooner did Gaal see a few of his men fall, than, with the rest, he fled hastily into the city. Zebul availed himself of this palpable exhibition of impotence, if not cowardice, to induce the people of Shechem to expel Gaal and his troop from the town. Abimelech, who was staying at Arumah, a place not far off, was informed of this the next morning, as well as that the inhabitants, although no longer guarded by Gaal, went out daily to the labours of the field. He therefore laid ambushes in the neighbourhood ; and when the men were come forth to their work in the vineyards, two of the ambushed parties rose to destroy them, while a third hastened to the gates to prevent their return to the town. The city itself was then taken, and Abimelech caused all the buildings to be destroyed, and the ground to be strewn with salt, as a symbol of the desolation to which his intention consigned it. The fortress, however, still remained, and a thousand men were in it. But they, fancying that it was not tenable, withdrew to "the strong-hold of the temple of Baal-Berith," which had the advantage of standing in a more elevated and commanding position. This, it will be noted, is the first temple which we read of in Scripture. On perceiving this, Abimelech cut down the bough of a tree with his battle-axe, and bore it upon his shoulder, directing all his men to do the same. The wood was deposited against the entrance and walls of the strong-hold, and, when kindled, made a tremendous fire, in which the building and the thousand men it contained in it were destroyed.

To follow up this victory, Abimelech marched against Thebez, another revolted town. As before, he took the town itself with little difficulty, but all the people had shut themselves up in the tower or fortress, which offered a more serious obstacle. However, Abimelech advanced to the door with the intention of burning it down, when a woman threw a large stone from the battlements above. It fell upon him, and broke his skull; and mindful, even in that bitter moment of that principle of military honour which counts death from a woman's hands disgraceful, he hastily called to his armour-bearer to thrust him through with his sword, that it might not be said a woman slew him. But the disgrace which he desired to avoid, attached for ever to his name; for it was always remembered to his dishonour that a woman slew him.

After Abimelech, Tola, of the tribe of Issachar, but dwelling in Mount Ephraim, governed the people for twenty-three years.

He was succeeded by Jair, a Gileadite (of eastern Manasseh), who judged Israel twenty-two years. His opulence is indicated by his being the owner of thirty villages, which, collectively, bore the name of Havoth-Jair (Jair's villages), and that he had thirty sons, all of whom he could afford to mo nt on young asses. In those days horses and mules were not in use among the Hebrews. Their place was not unworthily substituted by the fine breed of asses which the country afforded; and to possess as many as thirty of these, young and vigorous, and fit for the saddle (implying the possession of many more, older and of inferior condition), was no questionable sign of wealth.

As the administration of these two judges was peaceable, the notice of them is confined to a few lines; the chief design of the sacred historian being to record the calamities which the Israelites drew upon themselves by their apostacies to the idolatries of the surrounding nations, and their providential deliverances upon their repentance and return to their God and King. After the calm of these administrations, they multiplied their idolatries, and, in punishment for this, they were brought under a servitude to the Ammonites, which continued for eighteen years, and was particularly severe upon the tribes beyond Jordan, although the southern and central tribes on this side the river—Judah, Benjamin, and Ephraim, were also subdued.

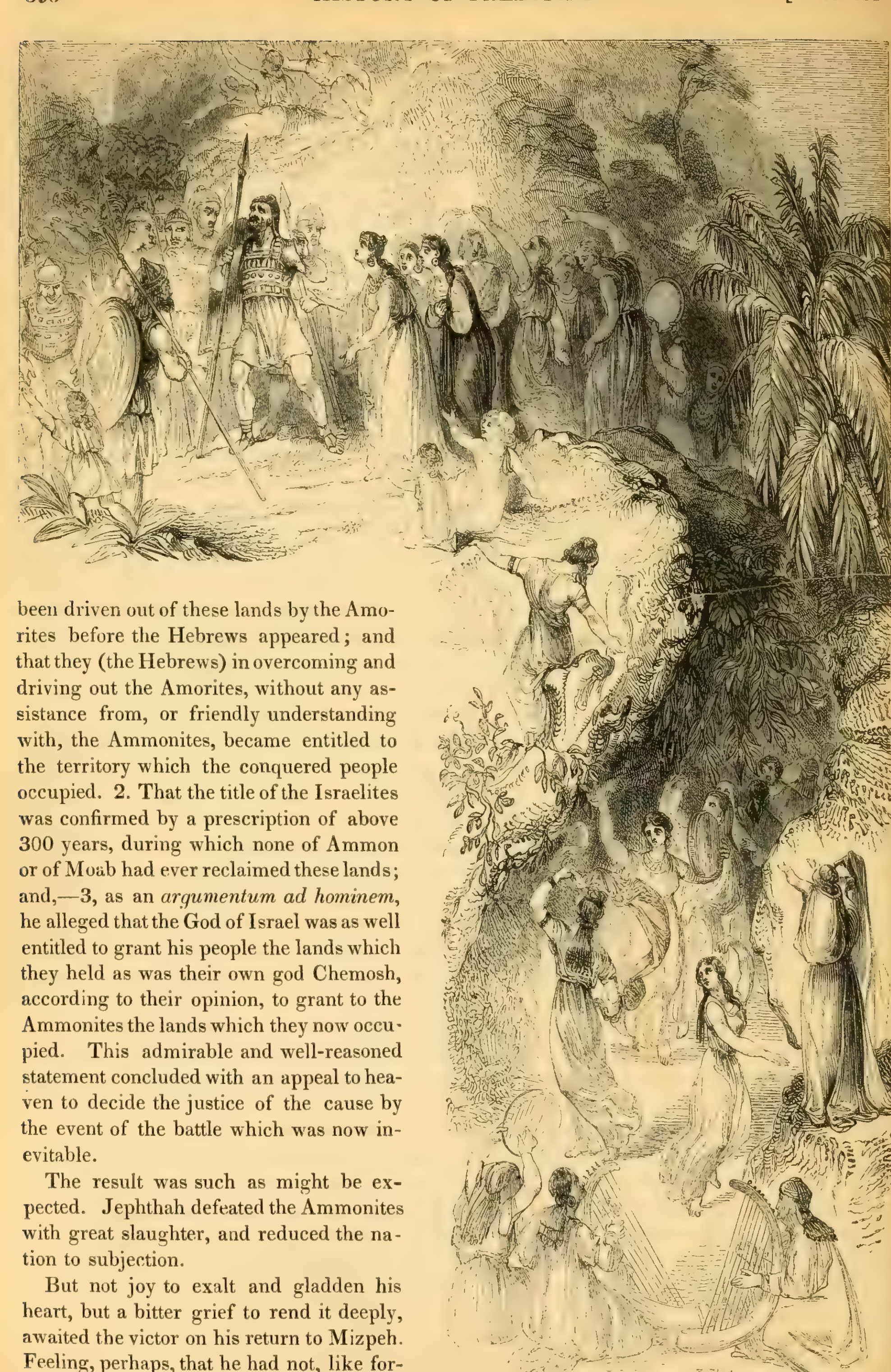
Corrected by calamity, the Israelites put away their idols and cried to God for pardon and deliverance. In reply to their suit, they were reminded of the deliverances which they had already experienced, notwithstanding which they had repeatedly turned to serve other gods. Their prayer was therefore refused; and they were told—"Go and cry to the gods that ye have chosen; let *them* deliver you in the time of your tribulation." Their reply to this was very proper;—"We have sinned: do thou to us whatever seemeth good unto thee; only deliver us, we pray thee, this time." And forthwith they rooted out the remains of idolatry from

among them, and worshipped Jehovah with such singleness and zeal that "his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel."

There was a man called Jephthah, who was, like Abimelech, the spurious son of a man who had a large family of legitimate children. When the father died, the other sons expelled Jephthah from among them, saying, "Thou shalt not inherit in our father's house, for thou art the son of a strange woman." As this last phrase generally denotes a foreigner, or one not of Israel, this treatment, although very harsh, was less unjust, under the peculiar circumstances of the Hebrew constitution, than might at the first view appear; for it was a strong point of the Mosaic policy to discourage all connection with foreigners (necessarily idolaters); and nothing was better calculated to this end, for a people like the Hebrews, than the disqualification of the progeny of such connections from receiving a share in the inheritance.

On this Jephthah withdrew into "the land of Tob," towards the borders of the desert: and as he had before this found opportunities of establishing a character for spirit and courage, he was soon joined by a number of destitute and idle young men, who were led by inclination, or more imperative inducements, to prefer the free life he led to the sober habits which a settling community requires. Besides, from pastoral societies, such as those beyond Jordan, the step into the free life of the desert is much shorter than it would be among a more agricultural people. It is really useless to attempt to consider Jephthah's troop otherwise than as a set of daring, careless fellows, acting as men do at the present day act in the East under similar circumstances, and similarly brought together. Being without any other means of subsistence, they unquestionably lived by a sort of robbery, as we should call it now, examples of which are found in all rude states of society, and to which, in such states of society, no one dreams of attaching disgrace. They lived doubtless by *raids*, or plundering excursions, into the neighbouring small states, driving off the cattle, and taking whatever came to their hands; and we may from analogy conclude that they waylaid and levied black-mail upon caravans, when composed of parties which they had no reason to treat with favour. Their point of honour probably was, to abstain from any acts against their own countrymen; and this exception existing, the body of the Israelites must have regarded the performances of Jephthah and his troop with favour, especially if, as is likely, they were thorns in the sides of the Ammonites, and took pleasure to annoy, in their own quarters, the enemies of Israel. However this may be, the courage and conduct of Jephthah became so well known by his successful enterprises, that when, after their repentance, the tribes beyond Jordan determined to make a stand against the Ammonites, but felt the want of a leader, they agreed that there was no known person so fit as Jephthah to lead them to battle. The chiefs of Gilead, his native district, therefore went in person to the land of Tob, to solicit this already celebrated person to undertake the conduct of the expedition. They were rather harshly received. "Did ye not hate me," said the hero, "and expel me from my father's house? and why do ye come to me *now*, when ye are in distress?" They, however, continued to press him, and intimated that, as had been usual in such cases, the government of, at least, the land of Gilead, would be the reward of his success. This was very agreeable to Jephthah, who forthwith accompanied them to Mizpeh, where this agreement was solemnly ratified, and all things necessary for conducting the war were regulated.

By the time Jephthah had organised his forces in Mizpeh, the Ammonites, taking alarm, had assembled a numerous army in Gilead. Although, from his previous habits of life, we should hardly have expected it from him, we find the Hebrew general commencing the war with much more than usual attention to those formalities which are judged necessary to render the grounds of quarrel manifest. He sent ambassadors to the king of the Ammonites, requiring to know why he had come to fight against the Hebrews in their own land. The king, in reply, alleged that he came to recover the land taken from his ancestors by the Israelites, on their way from Egypt, and of which he, therefore, required peaceable restitution. Jephthah in his reply gave a fair and clear recital of the whole transaction which had put these lands into the possession of the Hebrews, and he refused to surrender them on the following grounds:—1. He denied that the Ammonites had any existing title to the lands, for they had



been driven out of these lands by the Amorites before the Hebrews appeared; and that they (the Hebrews) in overcoming and driving out the Amorites, without any assistance from, or friendly understanding with, the Ammonites, became entitled to the territory which the conquered people occupied. 2. That the title of the Israelites was confirmed by a prescription of above 300 years, during which none of Ammon or of Moab had ever reclaimed these lands; and,—3, as an *argumentum ad hominem*, he alleged that the God of Israel was as well entitled to grant his people the lands which they held as was their own god Chemosh, according to their opinion, to grant to the Ammonites the lands which they now occupied. This admirable and well-reasoned statement concluded with an appeal to heaven to decide the justice of the cause by the event of the battle which was now inevitable.

The result was such as might be expected. Jephthah defeated the Ammonites with great slaughter, and reduced the nation to subjection.

But not joy to exalt and gladden his heart, but a bitter grief to rend it deeply, awaited the victor on his return to Mizpeh. Feeling, perhaps, that he had not, like former deliverers, been expressly and publicly

called and appointed by God to the work he had undertaken, he had sought to propitiate heaven by a vow, that if allowed to return to his home in peace, whatsoever first came forth to meet him should be offered as a burnt-offering to Jehovah.

Jephthah had no child, save one daughter, a virgin, beautiful and young. And she, when the news came of his great victory, and of his return in triumph and peace, went forth at the head of her fair companions to meet her glorious father, dancing joyously to their timbrels as he drew nigh. Here, then, was the object of his vow—his cherished daughter—the only object in the world which could call forth those kindly sympathies and tendernesses which lurk deep within even those natures which have been the most scarred and roughened in the storms of life. The desolated father rent his clothes, crying, "Alas! my daughter, thou hast brought me low indeed! . . . for I have opened my mouth to Jehovah and I cannot reverse it." Then, understanding the nature of his vow, that noble maiden, mindful only that Israel was delivered, and impressed with the solemn obligation which that vow imposed, sought not to turn her father from his purpose, or encouraged him to seek those evasions which others have since discovered for him. With unexampled magnanimity she cried, "My father, if thou hast opened thy mouth to Jehovah, do with me according to that which thou hast spoken; forasmuch as Jehovah hath taken vengeance for thee upon thine enemies, upon the Ammonites." All she desired was that she might be allowed for two months to wander among the mountains, with her companions, to bewail that it was not her lot to be a bride and mother in Israel. At the end of that time Jephthah "did with her according to his vow."

It is much to be regretted that the reluctance of the sacred writer to express in plain terms the dreadful immolation which we believe to be thus indicated, has left the whole matter open as a subject of dispute. The early Jewish and Christian writers (including Josephus) made no question that Jephthah, under a most mistaken notion of duty, did, after the manner of the heathen, really offer his daughter in sacrifice; but the ingenuity of modern criticism has discovered the alternative that she was not immolated on the altar, but was devoted to perpetual virginity in the service of the tabernacle. It must be confessed that the subject is one of such difficulty, as to render it hard to reach a positive conclusion. But on anxiously re-considering the question which has before engaged our attention,* we are sorry to feel constrained to adhere to the harsher alternative, which we were then led to consider the most probable.

There was no institution among the Jews under which practical effect could be given to the alternative which modern interpretation has provided; and even had not this been the case, there was, at the time that this devotement to the tabernacle must have taken place, no access to the tabernacle from the east; for Jephthah was about that time waging a bitter war with the tribe of Ephraim, in whose territory, at Shiloh, the ark was situated. This posture of affairs would preclude him from receiving from the priests those instructions and remonstrances which would have prevented that piteous immolation which he deemed his vow to require. We are persuaded that the more thoroughly any one makes himself acquainted with the spirit of the time, the state of religion, the nature of the ideas which then prevailed, the peculiarities of the ecclesiastical polity among the Hebrews, and the character of Jephthah himself,—the more strong will be his conviction that the infatuated hero really did offer his daughter in sacrifice, and the greater will the difficulty seem of providing any other alternative. The opinion of the Jews themselves is also entitled to some weight; and at a time when they abhorred the idea of human sacrifices, they not only state it as an unquestionable fact that this sacrifice did take place, but ascribe the deposition of the line of Eleazer from the high-priesthood, and the substitution of that of Ithamar, to the circumstance that the existing pontiff did not take measures to prevent this stain upon the annals of Israel.

We must consider how long the minds of the Israelites had been saturated with notions imbibed from the surrounding heathen, which implies the neglect, and consequent ignorance, of the divine law; and that among those ideas and practices that of the superior efficacy of human sacrifices occupied a prominent place. We may also reflect that a rough military adventurer, like Jephthah, had been even more than usually exposed to contaminating influ-

* 'Pictorial Bible' on Judges xi.

ences: such persons are also usually found to be superstitious, and are seldom capable of apprehending more than certain broad and hard features of such higher matters as are presented to their notice. Jephthah knew that human victims were generally regarded as in a peculiar degree acceptable to the gods; and as historical facts are in general more familiarly known than dogmas, it was probably unknown to him that human sacrifices were abhorrent to Jehovah, while he was certain to know that Abraham had been expressly commanded by God himself to offer his beloved Isaac upon the altar; and although the completion of this act was prevented, it would be remembered that the patriarch obtained high praise because he had not withheld even his only and well loved son from God. That Jephthah made such a vow at all, corroborates the view we take of his character. It was superstitious; and it implies his imperfect knowledge of the law, which would have apprised him of various alternatives which would render the fulfilment of his vow incompatible with obedience to the law. But to such a mind the literal accomplishment of a vow—whatever its purport—will appear the first of duties; and in the fulfilment of such a vow as this, it would seem that the greater his own anguish, the more deeply the iron entered into his own soul, the more meritorious, and the more acceptable to God, the act of the offerer was deemed

The virgins of Israel instituted an anniversary commemoration of four days, which they spent in celebrating the praises and bewailing the fate of Jephthah's daughter.

The misunderstanding with Ephraim, to which we have incidentally alluded, was similar to that which the tact of Gideon had averted on a former occasion. That haughty and overbearing tribe had been called to the war in the first instance, but refused to take part in the enterprise: but when that enterprise proved successful, they were astonished and mortified that Israel had been delivered by the Gileadites without their assistance. They then assembled tumultuously, and with many contemptuous and abusive expressions towards the Gileadites in general, and towards Jephthah in particular, they threatened to burn his house over his head, because he had not called them to the last decisive action. The conqueror stated the matter as it actually happened; for his rough nature would not permit him to smooth down their ruffled plumes, as Gideon had done on a similar occasion. And then, finding that they were still bent on mischief, he called out the Gileadites, who were highly exasperated at the reflections which had been cast upon them as "fugitives of Ephraim,"—"a base breed between Ephraim and Manasseh." A battle took place, in which the Ephraimites were signally defeated. They had crossed over to the eastern side of the Jordan, and, after the victory, the Gileadites hastened to seize the fords of that river, to intercept those of the fugitives who attempted to return to their homes. But as Israelites of all the tribes were constantly passing the river, a test was necessary to distinguish the Ephraimites from the others. It is remarkable that the test chosen was that of pronunciation. When any man approached to cross the river, he was asked, "Art thou an Ephraimite?" If he answered "No," they said, "Then, say *Sh*ibboleth" (water-brooks); but if he were really an Ephraimite, he could not pronounce the *sh*, but gave the word as "*S*ibboleth;" and was slain on the spot. This incident is curious, as showing that lingual differences had already arisen by which particular tribes could be distinguished. In like manner a Galilean was, in the time of Christ, known at Jerusalem by his speech. But there is nothing in this out of the usual course. The differences of pronunciation among the several tribes were probably not greater, if as great, as those which the different counties of England offer.

In this disastrous affair the loss of the Ephraimites amounted to 42,000 men. Such a success could be no matter of triumph to the unhappy Jephthah. His troubled life was not long protracted. He died after he had judged Israel six years. B.C. 1247.

After Jephthah follow the names of three judges, the silence of the record concerning whose actions may be understood to indicate a period of tranquillity and ease. These were Ibzan, of Bethlehem in Ephraim, for seven years; Elon, a Zebulonite, for ten years; and Abdon, an Ephraimite, for eight years. Under the repose of these administrations, however, the Hebrews again insensibly relapsed into idolatry. For this they were brought under a rigorous servitude to their western foes, the Philistines, which [in its full rigour] lasted for forty years. This

people had so recruited their strength since the days of Shamgar, that they now take a very conspicuous place in the Hebrew history, forming by far the most powerful and inveterate enemies the Israelites had yet encountered. They continued much longer than any other power had done to wield the weapon by which the iniquities of Israel were chastised; for it was not until the time of David that the deliverance was completed.

When we read of the corrupt state of the nation at large, it would be a grievous error to infer that *all* had departed from God. There are various intimations that, in the worst times, not a few families were to be found religious and well regulated, and which maintained among themselves the faith of the one only God, and followed with exactitude all the requirement of the law. Thus, at a later day, when the prophet deemed that he was himself the only one by whom Jehovah was acknowledged, God himself knew that there were in Israel 7000 persons whose knees had not been bowed to Baal.* But although these were the salt of Israel, they could not preserve the mass from such putrefaction as required that it should be cast forth and trodden under foot.

And now, about the same time that the Israelites were cast forth to be trodden under foot by the Philistines, it pleased their offended King, while with the one hand he punished his revolted subjects, to provide with the other for the *beginnings* of their deliverance at a future day. For about that time, the angel of Jehovah appeared to the wife of Manoah, a Danite, who had been barren, and promised her a son, who was to be a Nazarite (a person consecrated to God) from the womb, and that in time he should *begin* to deliver Israel from the yoke of the Philistines.

Accordingly the woman gave birth in due season to a son, on whom the name of Samson was bestowed. As the child grew, it became manifest that the most extraordinary bodily powers had been given to him: while, to prevent undue exaltation of spirit from the consciousness of superior powers, it was known to him that his gifts had no necessary dependence on the physical complication of his thews and sinews, but on his condition as a Nazarite, and on the unshorn hair which formed the sign and symbol of that condition.

It is from the twentieth year of his age, which was also the twentieth of the bondage to the Philistines, that we are to date the commencement of Samson's vindictive administration. He proved to be a man of ungovernable passions; but, through the influence of his destiny to begin the deliverance of Israel, it was so ordered that even his worst passions, and even the sorrows and calamities which these passions wrought upon himself, were made the instruments of distress and ruin to the Philistines.

The fact that the territory occupied by the tribe of Dan, to which Samson belonged, immediately adjoined the country of the Philistines, in consequence of which he became well acquainted with that people, ministered occasion for most of his operations against them. And first,—in the Philistine town of Timnath, Samson had seen a young woman with whom he was so well pleased that he resolved to obtain her for his wife. But as such matters were always adjusted between the parents of the respective parties, he went home and desired his father and mother to secure this woman for him. His parents would much have preferred that his choice had fallen on one of the daughters of his own people; but seeing his determination was fixed, they yielded, and went back with him to Timnath. It was on this journey that Samson gave the first recorded indication of the prodigious strength with which he was endowed, by slaying, without any weapon in his hands, a young and fierce lion by which he was assailed.

At Timnath the proposals of his parents were favourably received by the parents of the damsel Samson sought in marriage. It was necessary, by the customs of the time and country, that at least a month should pass between such a proposal and the celebration of the marriage. At the expiration of this time Samson, again accompanied by his parents, went down to Timnath to claim his bride. On the way he turned aside to see what had become of the carcass of the lion he had slain on the former journey. In that climate the carcasses of animals left dead upon the ground are speedily devoured by jackals and vultures, and other beasts

* 1 Kings, xix. 18.

and birds which feed on carrion. Even insects contribute largely to this service. Accordingly Samson found only the clean skeleton of the lion, partially covered with the undevoured hide. In the cavity thus formed a swarm of bees had lodged and deposited their honey. At wedding feasts it was at this time usual for the young men then assembled together, to amuse themselves by proposing riddles,—those who were unable to solve the riddle incurring a forfeiture to him by whom it was proposed, who himself was liable to a similar forfeiture if his riddle were found out. The adventure with the lion suggested to Samson the riddle which he proposed—" Out of the eater came forth food, and out of the fierce came forth sweetness." For three days they vainly tried to discover the meaning of this riddle; and at last, rather than incur the heavy forfeiture of " thirty shirts and thirty suits of raiment," they applied to the bride, and threatened destruction to her family if she did not extract from her husband the required solution, and make it known to them. He was very unwilling to tell her, declaring that even his father and mother were ignorant of it. But she put in practice all the little arts by which women have ever carried their points with men usually weak—as Samson was, with all his corporal strength,—and by her tears, and reproaches of his want of love and confidence, she so wearied him that he at length gave her the information she desired. The guests were consequently enabled, within the given time, to answer—" What is sweeter than honey? What is fiercer than a lion?" But Samson was well convinced that the wit of man could never have discovered the true solution without a knowledge of the circumstances, which they could only have obtained by tampering with his wife. He exclaimed indignantly—" If ye had not ploughed with my heifer, ye had not found out my riddle!" He did not, however, as he might have done, refuse the payment of the forfeiture he had thus unexpectedly incurred; but to obtain it, he went and slew thirty of the Philistines near Ascalon, and gave their raiment to the persons who had expounded his riddle. He then returned to his own home, without again seeing his wife, with whose conduct he was deeply disgusted.

But after some time his resentment subsided, and he went down to Timnath to revisit his wife, with a present of a kid. But he found that in the mean time she had been given in marriage to a man among the Philistines, who in former times had been his most dear and familiar friend, and who, in that character, he had chosen to act as his paranymph, or brideman, at the wedding. The incensed hero rejected with indignation the offer of the father to give him his youngest daughter in lieu of the woman he had married; and regarding, probably, the treatment he had received as in some degree resulting from the insolence of superiority, and from the contempt in which the Philistines held the people they had so long held in subjection, he considered himself justified in avenging his own injuries upon the Philistine nation, as part and parcel of the wrongs his nation suffered. This mode of taking his revenge was no less remarkable than effective. He obtained three hundred jackals, and tying them together, with a firebrand between their tails, let them loose. The affrighted animals, being so bound as to be obliged to run side by side, hastened for shelter to the fields of standing and ripened corn, which, at that dry season, when the corn was ripe, was easily kindled into a blaze. As the tortured jackals took different directions, the conflagration was very extensive; nor was it confined to the standing corn, but wrought much damage among the olive grounds and vineyards, and consumed the corn which had been cut down and heaped for the threshing-floor.

When the Philistines understood the immediate cause of this act of hostility on the part of Samson, they went and burned his wife and her father's house with fire; thus punishing them for that breach of faith to which they were first led by the fear of this very punishment. If this act was intended to appease Samson, it had not that effect; for it did not prevent him from taking an opportunity which offered of discomfiting, with much slaughter, a considerable number of men belonging to that nation. He then withdrew to a strong rock, called Etam, in the tribe of Judah. To that place he was pursued by a large body of Philistines, whose presence occasioned great alarm to the Judaites. But when they understood that Samson individually was the sole object of this incursion, they most shamefully undertook of themselves to deliver him up to his enemies. Accordingly 3000 of them went up to him, feeling assured that he would not act against his own people. They told him they were come to bind him,

and to put him into the hands of the Philistines. It strikingly illustrates the opinion Samson had of his own countrymen—an opinion which the circumstances justified—that before he consented to be bound, he obliged them to swear *that they would not kill him themselves.* He then allowed them to bind him securely with two new ropes, and to take him down to the Philistines. When he was led to their camp, they raised a triumphant shout against him. As he heard that shout, "the Spirit of Jehovah came mightily upon him;" he burst his strong bands asunder as easily as if they had been tow burnt with fire, and seizing the jaw-bone of an ass which lay at hand, he flew upon the Philistines, and, with no other weapon, routed the whole thousands which had come against him, slaying many of their number. They only lived who fled. As Milton makes the hero observe—

> "Had Judah that day join'd, or one whole tribe,
> They had by this possess'd the towers of Gath,
> And lorded over them whom now they serve;
> But what more oft, in nations grown eorrup,
> And by their vices brought to servitude,
> Than to love bondage more than liberty,
> Bondage with ease than strenuous liberty;
> And to despise, or envy, or suspect,
> Whom God hath of his special favour raised
> As their deliverer? If he aught begin
> How frequent to desert him, and at last
> To heap ingratitude on worthiest deeds."—SAMSON AGONISTES.

Proudly confident in his strength, Samson was not deterred from going again among the Philistines, as soon as a motive occurred in the indulgence of that blind passion which had already brought him into much trouble, and which was destined to be his ruin. He went to Gaza,* to visit a harlot of that place. His arrival was soon known; and although this was a different state from that which had been the scene of his former exploits, the authorities of the place were too sensible of the importance of destroying this implacable enemy of their nation, to neglect the advantage which his folly had placed in their hands. The city gates were closed to prevent his escape; and a strong guard was placed there to surprise and kill him in the morning. Samson, however, anticipated their plan; and, rising at midnight, he went boldly to the gate, forced it from its place, and, by way of bravado, carried it off entire, posts, bars, and all, to the top of a hill on the way to Hebron. The guards were too much astonished and terrified to molest or pursue him.

After this Samson did not again venture into the territory of the Philistines, but sought at home the indulgence of those blinding passions which make the strongest weak. "He loved a woman in the vale of Serek," so celebrated for its vines. Her name was Dalilah, and she was probably of Israel, although Josephus, to save the credit of his countrywomen, makes her a Philistine. The Philistines themselves took an anxious interest in all the movements of Samson, and were soon acquainted with this new besotment, of which they prepared to take advantage. A deputation, consisting of a principal person from each of the five Philistine states, went up the valley to the place where he was. And now, we observe, it was not their object to get possession of his person while he retained all his strength, but to ascertain how that strength might be taken from him. They were well persuaded that a strength so greatly exceeding all they knew or had ever heard of, and to which that possessed by the few descendants of Anak who lived among them, could not for an instant be compared, must be supernatural—the result of some condition which might be neutralised, or of some charm which might be broken. They therefore offered Dalilah the heavy bribe of 1100 shekels of silver from each of their number (amounting altogether to 687*l.*) to discover the secret of his great strength, and to betray him into their hands, that they might bind and afflict him. Samson amused her by telling her of certain processes whereby the weakness of other men would be brought upon him; but each time the imposition was detected, by her putting the process to the proof. Then she continued to worry him by such trite but always effective reproaches, as, "*How canst thou say 'I love thee,' when thy heart is not with me?* for thou hast deceived me these three times, and hast not told me wherein thy great strength lieth." Thus day by

* See the cut at the head of this chapter.

day she pressed him and urged him, until "his soul was vexed unto death," and at last he told the whole truth to her,—that he was a Nazarite from his birth, and that if he left that state by cutting off his hair, which had never yet been shorn or shaven, his extraordinary strength would depart from him. Dalilah saw by his earnestness that he had this time told her the truth. Accordingly she sent for a man, who, while the hero slept with his head upon her lap, shaved off the luxuriant tresses of his hair. His strength departed from him: but he knew it not; and when aroused from his sleep by the approach of the Philistines to seize him, he thought to put forth his wonted power and destroy them all; but his listless arms refused to render him their wonted service, and he knew—too late—that "Jehovah had departed from him."

The Philistines took and bound him; and, to complete his disablement, put out both his eyes—a mode of rendering a public enemy or offender incapable of further offence, of which this is the first historical instance, but which has ever since been much resorted to in the kingdoms of the East.* They then took him down to Gath, and binding him with fetters of brass, employed him to grind in the prison-house.

Nothing could more clearly than this deprivation evince the miraculous nature of the superhuman strength with which Samson had been for special purposes invested. Samson himself had *known* this before; but now, weak, blind, bound, "disglorified," and degraded to a woman's service,† he had occasion and leisure to *feel* it; and in his "prison-house" he probably learnt more of himself than he had known in all his previous life. Nor was this knowledge unprofitable. He felt that although he had *begun* to deliver Israel, this employment of the gifts confided to him had rather been the incidental effect of his own insensate passions than the result of those stern and steady purposes which became one who had so solemnly been set apart, even before his birth, to the salvation of his country. Such thoughts as these brought repentance to his soul; and as by this repentance his condition of Nazariteship was in some sort renewed, it pleased God that, along with the growth of his hair, his strength should gradually return to him.

Fatally for the Philistines, they took the view that, since the strength of Samson had been the gift of the God of Israel, their triumph over him evinced that their own god, Dagon, was more powerful than Jehovah. This raised the matter from being a case between Samson and the Philistines, to one between Jehovah and Dagon; and it thus became necessary that the Divine honour should be vindicated. An occasion for this was soon offered under aggravated circumstances.

The Philistines held a feast to Dagon, their god, who, as they supposed, had delivered their enemy into their hands. In the height of their festivity they thought of ordering Samson himself to be produced, that the people might feed their eyes with the sight of the degraded condition of one who had not long since been their dread. The assembled multitude greeted his appearance with shouts of triumph, and praised their god who had reduced "the destroyer of their country" to be their bond slave. After having been for some time exposed to their mockeries and insults, the blind hero desired the lad who led and held him by the hand, to let him rest himself against the pillars which sustained the chief weight of the roof of the temple, upon which no less than 3000 persons had assembled to view the spectacle, and celebrate Dagon's sacrifices. Thus placed, Samson breathed the prayer—"O Lord Jehovah, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, *only this once*, O God, that I may at once be avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes!" Saying this, he grasped the pillars with his mighty arms, and crying, "Let me die with the Philistines!" he bowed himself with such prodigious force that the pillars gave way, and then the roof fell in, destroying with one tremendous crash all who were above it and below it. Thus those whom Samson slew at his death were more in number than those he slew in his life.

* This barbarous infliction is, however, now—under the operation of those humanising influences which are insensibly pervading the East—in the course of being discontinued. It was formerly more common in Persia than in any other country; but it became comparatively rare under the late king; and we believe that no instance has yet occurred in which the present monarch has resorted to it.

† Grinding is almost invariably perfomed by women in the East.

"It is remarkable that the exploits of Samson against the Philistines were performed singly, and without any co-operation from his countrymen to vindicate their liberties:



[Supporting Pillars of Eastern Buildings.]

whether it was that the arm of the Lord might be the more visibly revealed in him, or that his countrymen were too much depressed by the severity of their servitude to be animated by his example. They seem also to have feared him almost as much as they did the Philistines. Else why should 3000 armed men of Judah have gone to persuade him to surrender himself to the Philistines, when, with such a leader, they might naturally expect to have been invincible? or why, when he destroyed [routed?] a thousand Philistines with so simple a weapon did he not join in pursuit of the rest? So true was the prediction of the angel to his mother, that he should only *begin* to deliver Israel."*

It scarcely appears that Samson exercised any authority in the tribes; but to carry on the historical time, he is counted as one of the judges, and his administration is computed at forty years, ending by his death, in the year 1222, B.C.

* Hales, ii. 208.

NOTE ON ANCIENT MONUMENTS OF STONE.

In again turning our attention to the subject which was partly considered in the note at page 356, we may introduce a few further remarks on the monuments formed by single pillars of unhewn stone, before proceeding to those other remains, of a more complicated character, which, whatever be their measure of general interest, are so rarely mentioned in Scripture as to be of somewhat less interest to the biblical reader than these more simple monuments.

Considering the tendencies of religious corruption, such as we have had occasion to expound in former pages of this work, under which usages, good or harmless in themselves, were distorted to bad uses, rather than new usages invented,—it is not wonderful that the respect paid to the anointed and other memorial stones ultimately degenerated into rank idolatry. Thus, according to Al Jannabius, many of the ancient gods of the Arabians were no other than large rude stones, the worship of which the posterity of Ishmael had first introduced. "To us it seems most probable that these great stones were the first places of Divine worship among the Arabs, on which they poured wine and oil as Jacob did upon the stones that served him for a pillow when he saw his vision. Afterwards they might worship these stones themselves as the Phœnicians in all probability did."* Instances of worship paid to rude stones are too numerous to leave the fact questionable; and we think that it will in most cases be found that the stones thus unduly honoured were stones not newly erected, but were ancient even to the worshippers, and such as preceding ages had been accustomed to respect.

In the progress of civilisation, these rude stone pillars which have engaged our attention, ceased to be erected. They were exchanged for works of art, and ultimately for regulated structures. Thus the Britons, after they had received Christianity and had become somewhat more civilised, instead of rough and ponderous stones set up as monumental pillars, employed high and rudely carved stones, several of which are still found in some of our very ancient churchyards, in particular at Penrith in Cumberland, described by so many of our antiquaries. In Egypt the sculptured obelisks may be regarded as the substitutes of such rude memorials. Such also, as well as the earlier unhewn stones, are found in India,* and sculptured pillars in Persia, where also traces of these earlier monuments have been found by Sir William Ouseley and others.

In Syria this change seems to have taken place about the time when the regal government commenced in Israel. It might have taken place earlier among the Phœnicians and other Syrian nations; but we do not meet with them among the Israelites till then, and after that we never read of memorials of rude stone. We feel uncertain whether the monument which Saul set up to commemorate his victory over the Amalekites † was a rude stone or a constructed monument: but as other terms are employed when a memorial of the former description is intended, it seems likely that this is to be regarded as the first historical instance in the Scriptures of an erection different from the simple monuments employed in earlier times. This is the more clear from the fact that the same terms are used with reference to the monument erected by Absalom, which was more obviously a wrought structure of some kind. The manner in which this is mentioned strongly brings out the *memorial* object of such erections.‡ There are still some ancient monuments of this class in the country, which very probably offer the forms which were given to these erections. They occur mostly in the northern part of the Phœnician territory, on the approach to Tortosa and Aradus, that is to say, they occur within short distances of each other four or five miles south of Tartous, and nearly the same distance east of the isle of Aradus. The best descriptions of them have been given by Maundrell, Pococke, and Buckingham. Advancing towards the shore from the mountains, we first observe a square mass of rock, hewn down perpendicularly on all sides. It is twelve paces in each front, and from twelve to fifteen feet high. It is plain on three of its sides, but has on the other, in the centre, a square passage which leads by three or four steps to the top. Beneath the square aperture admitting to these steps is a row of

* 'Ancient Universal History,' xviii. 387.

* Tavernier, ii. 32.

† 1 Sam. xv. 12.

‡ "Absalom had in his lifetime taken and reared up for himself a monument which is in the king's dale: for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance; and he called the monument after his own name: and it is called to this day Absalom's monument." 2 Sam. xviii. 18.

rudely cut niches. The top of the whole is flat; and, with the exception of the passage up to it by the square aperture and the steps, is one solid mass of rock, with no discoverable opening to an interior. The stone is now rent in two or three places, and the whole has an air of great rudeness and age. Mr. Buckingham could not conjecture whether it was designed for a tomb, a temple, or an altar. But from the flatness of the top, and the means of access provided to it, there is more probability of its being a *fire altar* than anything else. About 200 yards to the west of this is a work of masonry, difficult of access by reason of the thickets which surround it. It is about fifteen paces square, and at least thirty feet high. The stones of which it is constructed are so large that, besides the foundation which projects about three feet from the main body of the pile in the form of a pedestal, two tiers of them are sufficient for the height, and two stones for the whole breadth of each front Above is a layer of smaller stones, as if for a deep frieze; and the whole crowned by a convex, moulded, and overhanging cornice. In the interior there are two chambers, each occupying the whole square of the building—excepting only the thickness of the walls, which was about ten feet, and in their height extending from the base to the summit. There is no visible communication between the lower and upper chambers; nor are there any steps leading to the entrance of the latter from without; so that it could not have been intended to be entered often, if at all, after being once closed. Both chambers are roofed over with two large beams of stone that serve to cover them completely. The original work was massy and excellent; but time and the effects of earthquakes have shaken it, and severed the stone in many places. This structure was unquestionably intended for a monumental tomb, probably of the ancient Phœnicians.

To the north of this, about a quarter of a mile, a little to the right of the common road from Tripoli to Tartous, upon an eminence hewn throughout with old quarries, we come to what appears like the pedestal of an obelisk. Its base is seven paces square; and after two ranges of steps is a square pedestal, about eight feet square every way, with a square block of stone upon it, sloped away at the top in a pyramidal form, but not going quite high enough to come to a point, so that its top was flat: the whole may be about fifteen feet in height, and, as appears from this description, composed of two stones besides the base. The stone is soft, and has been much corroded by the sea air. This is undoubtedly a sepulchral monument; and some twenty paces from it is a passage of entrance to sepulchres below. These it is not our present object to describe.

About 300 yards to the north-west of this



[Monumental Pillars.]

are the two sepulchral pillars represented in the annexed engraving. They are very similar in design and execution to the last described. The first has a circular pedestal about six feet high, with four fronts of lions or sphinxes, rudely carved at the best, and now much disfigured by time. On this pedestal stands a circular column about twenty feet high,* formed into two divisions by mouldings, the lower division being about twelve, and the higher eight feet high. Its diminishing diameter and rounded top are shown in the engraving. The stone is much decayed by the sea air; and a tree, which has thrust itself up through the pedestal on the eastern side, has torn away almost half of the upper column on the same front, "like the banian-trees of India," observes Buckingham, "which operate more than time to destroy the monuments of that country."

The other tower stands only ten yards from this. It is thirty feet high, and is composed of three stones,—a square pedestal, on which stands a circular pillar, surmounted by another stone in the form of a six-sided pyramid. The sepulchres below these pillars indicate their design as sepulchral monuments.

We have paid the more attention to these monuments, not only from their connection with the matter under discussion, but inasmuch as they are unquestionably the most ancient constructed edifices of the country, and throw such light upon its old monumental architecture. At Jerusalem, in the valley of Jehoshaphat, there are other sepulchral monuments, cut out from the living rock (like some of those which have been described); and although they exhibit decorations which declare that they belong to a later age, it is not difficult to recognise in them the three principal divisions which prevail in the earlier instances, and by which indeed the *style* may be said to be characterised—the square and elevated basement, the circular pillar, and the pyramidal coping. But we shall have another occasion of noticing the monuments which the valley of Jehoshaphat contains.

But while the patriarchal custom of rearing pillars of stone, was thus, in these countries, lost, when the arts multiplied and civilisation advanced, so, on the other hand, it was transferred into, and longer preserved, in more remote and barbarous regions. On this point King observes,—"The analogy between the customs of the most ancient nations and those of all such others as have been branched off and separated from them in the very early periods of the world, have for ages been shut out from the improvements of civilisation, is, in a variety of instances, exceedingly deserving of notice. Thus we may not only find the custom of raising stones *as memorials* preserved among the Britons long after it was disused by the Asiatics and by the Greeks, and had become even unknown to the Romans, but among the Indians of America we find the custom preserved to our own days."

In this observation the usages of the northern nations of Europe should not be entirely overlooked. Here memorials of stone continued in use down to so late a period, that they became charged with inscriptions declaring the objects for which they were erected. This is therefore good and tangible testimony; and it is very gratifying to us to find it in entire agreement with that which we have deduced from the mention of such monuments in Scripture—namely, that they were *memorials* of *different* circumstances—such as battles, sepulchres, signal events, and boundaries. With respect to the latter, Olaus Magnus remarks, with justifiable pride:—"There are also high stones, by the aspect and signature whereof the ancient possessions of provinces, governments, forts, communities of noble and country men, are suffered to continue to every man in peace, without laws, suits, or arbitration, giving an example to other nations, that among those nations there is more right to be found in these stones that are boundaries, than elsewhere in the large volumes of laws, where men think themselves to be more learned and civil."* So it was among the Israelites.

Circles of Stone.—As it is not our object to notice these remains according to their absolute importance, but only in proportion as they are connected with, or supply illustration to this portion of our history, the reader will not be surprised to find that none of those which remain to be noticed will receive as much of our attention as we have given to the single memorial stones. These are far more frequently mentioned in our history than any other; and therefore even the circles of stone —although by far the most important of the whole class of rude stone monuments—will, for our present purposes, need less extensive notice.

We will now first examine the passages of

* So Buckingham. This makes the whole monument 26 feet high, but Maundrell says 30 feet two inches.

* 'A Compendious History of the Goths, Swedes, and Vandals, and other Northern Nations. Written by Olaus Magnus, Archbishop of Upsall and Metropolitan of Sweden. London, 1658.' This work contains some curious and clear information; but as it would only supply corroboration of what has been already stated, we have the less reason to regret that the limits we must prescribe to a subject of this nature will not allow us to produce it.

Scripture which seem to refer to such monuments, and to the ideas connected with them.

When God was about to deliver the principles of His law from the mountain of Sinai, Moses was repeatedly charged to place boundaries around the mountain consecrated by His presence, that the people assembled at its foot might be kept at a reverent distance, and not pry too minutely and closely into the mysteries of God. Instant death was the penalty of trespass beyond these bounds.* So much importance was attached to this that afterwards, when Moses went up into the mountain, he was charged to go down again and enforce obedience to this interdiction. This boundary was undoubtedly of stones. A boundary which should offer a physical obstacle to such a multitude was not required, but merely one which should mark out to them the limit beyond which they might not pass; and for this purpose stones placed at certain distances would suffice. The real restraint was moral and penal. It is absurd to think of a wooden railing, a hedge, or even a stone wall. This would detract much from the dignity of the circumstances. Here then was a sacred enclosure, the summit or centre of which was consecrated by the presence of God: within this enclosure only the ministering and chief persons (Moses, Aaron, the four sons of the latter, and seventy elders of Israel) were admitted, while the mass of the people stood without. This instance seems to us so important, that it will become the basis of our illustrations; although, from there being no express mention of "stones," its bearing has been overlooked by those who have written on the subject. In this case the encircling boundary enclosed holy ground, and marked out to the people the limit beyond which they might not trespass.

Not long after this the people entered into their solemn covenant with God. On this occasion Moses built an altar of earth at the bottom of the mountain, and around it erected twelve stones, corresponding to the twelve tribes of Israel.† This act corresponds with the explanation already given of a pillar near an altar—as the monument of a solemn covenant: the altar indicating that God was one of the contracting parties, and the pillars in this instance being twelve, to indicate that the parties on the other side were twelve in number.

* "Set thou a boundary round about the mountain, and speak to the people, saying, Take heed to yourselves that ye go not up to the mountain, nor touch its borders. Whosoever toucheth the mountain shall surely die. Let not a hand touch him; but let him surely be stoned or shot through. Whether it be man or beast he shall not live." Exod. xix. 12.

† Exod xxiv. 4.

And here it occurs to us to refer to the tabernacle itself, which comes next in order of time, and afterwards to the Temple, as illustrating one class of the ideas connected with such erections. The establishment in both instances was an enclosure, open to the air, in the midst of which stood the altar, before the sacred tent in the one instance, and before the building in the other, in which the symbol of the Divine presence was enthroned. Within the enclosure (and in the Temple, the *inner* enclosure) none but the ministers and great persons were admitted, together with such of the people as brought offerings to the altar. Now, on close examination, it is seen that the idea in all this is essentially the same as when a boundary was laid around the foot of the mountain which was made holy by the presence of God. And the comparison of these ideas throws light upon the respective circumstances; and thus while we see how the primitive form of separation was applied to constructed edifices; the intentions and details more fully developed in them bring out the ideas involved in, or offer a commentary on the text of the primitive enclosures.

The next example, and that a very striking one, is that of the twelve stones which were pitched in the bed of the Jordan, and the other twelve which were taken up out of the bed of that river, and pitched in Gilgal to commemorate the passage of that river. The object of this is clearly declared:—"That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask, in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones? Then ye shall answer them, The waters of the Jordan were cut off, and *these stones are for a perpetual memorial to the Israelites*."* As, then, this was intended for a standing monument, the stones must have been embedded in the ground, so as not to be removed without some force; and when thus embedded, they must have had some elevation above the ground, so that they might not, in the course of time, be covered by the soil. From this, as well as from the analogy in other instances, it will follow that the stones selected for this purpose were of a shape suitable to their being set up as pillars, and that they were so set up. It would seem from the terms of the text that each of the twelve stones was borne to its place by a man from each of the tribes; and although the strongest men were doubtless chosen for this service, the stones could have been but small in comparison with others set up as pillars of memorial. It is, indeed, possible that although the formal duty devolved on a man from each

* Josh. iv. 5—7.

tribe, he was not precluded from receiving the assistance of other men not formally appointed, in which case the stones may have been larger. Now if these stones were indeed set up as pillars, there is no form in which they can be conceived to be placed so likely as that of a circle; and that it was such is implied in the name Gilgal (a circle, a round, a wheel, &c.); and the same might be inferred from the fact that this was the form of arrangement which analogous instances offer.

Now as this of Gilgal is by far the most important of the monuments of the class now under consideration which occurs in the history of the Hebrew nation, it is of much importance to collect the ideas which appear to have been afterwards connected with it.

The first "messenger," or prophet,* whom we read of in Scripture as being sent on a special mission, came from Gilgal, which, although not in itself a circumstance of much importance, may, in connection with others that follow, suggest that the place had even thus early become a station of priests or prophets to admonish and instruct the people. The inference which may be deduced from Ehud's return to Eglon when he had proceeded as far as Gilgal, has already been noticed,—as suggesting that the place was accounted sacred by the Hebrews, and had, perhaps in consequence of that sanctity, been appropriated to idolatrous uses by the Moabites. Afterwards Gilgal comes before us as a place where various of the more solemn acts of public business—legislative, judicial, deliberative, and political—were transacted.

It is remarkable that all the places at which Samuel held his courts of judicature, in his annual circuits from his residence at Ramah, were places of sacred stones. "He went from year to year in circuit to Bethel (the place of Jacob's sacred stone or stones), *and Gilgal*, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all these places."† Concerning Mizpeh, we may observe that this name was given to the place of the stones collected and set up by Jacob and Laban on the other side Jordan, or, more exactly, Mizpeh was the name given to the stone or pillar of memorial there set up, while 'Gilead' was that of *the heap* of stones, or of the whole place collectively.‡ We know not, however, that this was the Mizpeh of the present text, which may have been another place of an erected pillar (as the name itself imports) on the borders of Judah and Benjamin. This Mizpeh was almost equal with Gilgal as a place of assemblage for public transactions. It was here that the tribes met at the call of the Levite to deliberate on the war against Benjamin.* It was at this place that Samuel convened the solemn national assembly of repentant Israel, which is mentioned in 1 Sam. vii. 5—12; and from the sequel it appears that Mizpeh was so well known even to the Philistines as a place for assemblies of the nation, when it had some great matter in view, that they no sooner heard of this meeting than they marched up their army against the assembly. The same prophet "called all Israel together in Mizpeh" for the election of a king.† But we have not yet done with Gilgal. There must have been an altar at this place, although the occasion of its erection is not mentioned; for that burnt offerings and peace offerings might be offered there is manifest from Samuel's direction to Saul,—"Go down before me to Gilgal; and, behold, I will come down to thee, to offer burnt offerings, and to sacrifice sacrifices of peace offerings."‡ Here the same Saul was inaugurated as king—the first king—on a subsequent occasion. After Saul's victory over the Ammonites, "Samuel said to the people—Come, let us go down to Gilgal and renew the kingdom there. And all the people went to Gilgal; and THERE *they made Saul king before Jehovah in Gilgal; and* THERE *they sacrificed sacrifices of peace offerings before Jehovah; and* THERE Saul and *all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.*"§ Saul himself, at a later day, called the people together at the same place for war against the Philistines; and after waiting for Samuel, he himself offered sacrifices there to Jehovah, before commencing his expedition.‖ It was under the pretence or delusion of sacrificing to Jehovah in Gilgal, that Saul spared the choice cattle of the Amalekites, although that people and all that belonged to them had been devoted by the vow of *cherem* to utter destruction. And it was here, "before Jehovah in Gilgal," that Samuel hewed Agag in pieces.¶ So also, when David returned from the other side Jordan, after the defeat and death of Absalom, he proceeded to Gilgal, where the people of Judah and a portion of the other Israelites met him, with the intention of inviting him to resume the government,—or, in some sort, to re-elect him, as they had seemed to have rescinded their original choice by their intermediate adhesion to Absalom.** Gilgal appears to have been the customary residence of the prophe Elijah, for it was from thence he set forth

* Judg. ii. 1. See marginal reading.
† 1 Sam. vii. 16.
‡ Gen. xxxi. 48, 49.

* Judg. xx. 1.
† 1 Sam. x. 17.
‡ 1 Sam. x. 8.
§ 1 Sam. xi. 14, 15.
‖ 1 Sam. xiii. 4, 7, 12, 15.
¶ 1 Sam. xii. 21, 33.
** 1 Sam. xix. 40, &c.

with Elisha, before he was taken away. This confirms a previous conjecture that there was a college or school of the prophets at this place.* In the earlier prophets there are many denunciations against the corruptions of which Gilgal† ultimately became the seat. In some of these places it is coupled in this condemnation with Bethel, another place of sacred stones; and this shows that the ancient sanctities connected with these places failed not to point them out for idolatrous appropriation.

The next, and indeed the only other instance which the Scripture offers, is that which formed a part of the great solemnity at Ebal and Gerizim. In this case "great stones" were set up, and covered with inscriptions from the words of the Law; and there was connected with them an altar of unhewn stones. The inscriptions remove this one degree from the originally simple character of its class of monuments; yet the instance is of great importance, from its clear intimation that the "great stones" spoken of on such occasions were apart and distinct from the altar; for as this is not distinctly stated in the other examples which have been adduced, some interpreters have supposed that at Gilgal and Sinai they were employed in the construction of the altars. This notion arose from want of sufficient attention to the rude stone erections of primitive times, which precluded commentators from being aware of any other use than that of building an altar to which they could be applied.

Now all these instances are in perfect accordance with the construction and use of the still existing "Druidical circles," as they are called, of which our own country offers some of the grandest, and probably most ancient, examples in the world—the principal being those of Abury and Stonehenge. In our own times antiquarians have ceased to dispute whether these circles of stones were intended for religious, civil, or military uses, but are more disposed to agree that they were intended for all these purposes; and this conclusion is, to our minds, satisfactorily corroborated by the diversified occasions on which resort was made to Gilgal. The result of this conclusion would be, that such erections were temples primarily, and, like all temples (and even now our own churches, when separate public buildings are wanting for parochial business), were used when necessary for important public purposes. Thus, among the Israelites, the tabernacle, and afterwards the temple, were not only the places of religious service, but the places of concourse to the people on all public matters of importance. The resort to their places of stones were only occasional, although, as we have seen, sufficiently frequent in early times to indicate the continued operation of the habits and ideas connected with such monuments. This simple and obvious explanation has tended much to mitigate the warmth with which the various single alternatives were, during the last century, advocated by different writers on the subject; while, at the same time, it demonstrates their analogy to, or identity with, the arrangements of "great stones" which the Scriptures mention.

This indefinite appropriation of the stone circles in different countries, doubtless arose from the union, under the ancient systems of religion, of the religious, legislative, and judicial functions in the same persons: and the legislators and judges who, as priests, were invested with a sacred character, would naturally avail themselves of bearing out the authority which their civil and judicial acts derived from that connection, by associating them also with *the sacred place*. It seems to us that the religious use of these monuments formed the primary idea in their construction; and that their civil use was a secondary notion, or rather one *necessarily involved* in the other. But we think we can perceive that, after the religious notions connected with these erections had passed away, they long continued to be appropriated to civil assemblages. Hence we have of this latter appropriation historical proof, and almost existing usage, which cannot ascend so high as the religious appropriation.

The religious use of these circles having been well established by Stukeley, Rowland, Borlase, and other of the earlier writers on the subject; those of more recent date have more particularly directed their attention to the proof that they were also used for civil assemblies. King, however, while he proves that such circles were used for civil purposes, seems to think that different circles had different appropriations; and that those used for religious services were not *also* used for civil objects. From this latter proposition we have been led, as the reader has seen, to dissent; and in the opinion that the open temples of stones were used also for civil assemblies, we find that we have the very valuable support of Sir R. C. Hoare. We may, however, accept King's proofs that public business was transacted at such places, without adopting his hypothesis. He was probably led to this conclusion by observing that his historical authorities mention *only* the civil uses of certain of such erections; but for this it will pro-

* 2 Kings, ii. 1.

† See Amos, iv. 4, v. 5; Hosea, iv. 15, ix. 12, xii. 11.

bably be thought that we have given a sufficient explanation, by indicating that the civil use of such circles was retained or remembered long after the religious use had been discontinued and forgotten. The examples which this very ingenious writer has collected of the civil uses of these monuments are those which follow.

Cæsar* has told us concerning the Gaulish Druids (whom he describes as imitators of the British Druids, and as deriving from them their customs and their science), that at certain times of the year they sat in a certain *consecrated place*, to which all that had controversies came from every part around and submitted to their judgment and decrees; and that they determined concerning all disputes, public and private, concerning murder, concerning the rights of inheritance, and concerning the boundaries of land. These *loci consecrati*, where such judicial assemblies were held, were unquestionably places of sacred stones, and seem to us to offer a very exact parallel to Samuel's judicial circuits to Bethel, Mizpeh, and Gilgal.

Epiphanius, who was born and lived in Syria, describes an open circle as a place of prayer, formed by the ancient Samaritans

Homer more than once alludes to councils as being held within or at circles of stones. The remarkable passages in the 'Iliad,' xviii. l. 585, which Pope has spoiled in his translation, King himself would thus render,—" The herald at length appeased the tumult. And the elders sat on, or at, rough hewn stones within a sacred circle." So likewise the council summoned by Alcinous to confer upon the affairs of Ulysses, sat on, or at, rough-hewn stones.† The importance of the word *at* instead of *on* in these interpretations, results from the conclusion of King that in such councils or assemblies, each of the stones in the circle marked the station *at* which each member of the council sat, while the president or chief sat or stood by the stone or pillar which is often found in the centre of such circles; nor is there wanting good evidence for the probability of this conjecture,—at least of the latter part of it; but of this we shall have to take separate notice.

After pointing to these examples, Mr. King observes, in continuation, " Other instances might be produced. And those who wish to pursue this inquiry further will find several curious facts mentioned in ancient writings, many tending to show even the continuance of the use of stone circles on various occasions, as of public inaugurations and of councils even so late as the fourteenth century, in the north of Germany, Sweden, Denmark, and the Western Isles."

* De Bello Gallico, lib. vi.

† Odyss. viii. 5.

We believe that this use of the circles of stone descends even later. However, we cannot forbear from tracing lower than to classical sources, the illustration which Mr. King declines, and to the sources of which he has neglected to refer those who would wish to pursue it.

" The Icelandic writers tell us that such circles were called *domh-ringr*, that is, literally, *doom rings*, or circles of judgment, being the solemn places where courts were held, of all kinds and dignities, from the national council down to the baronial court, or that of a common proprietor of land, for adjusting disputes between his *villani* and slaves."*

Olaus Magnus mentions a practice, seemingly as existing in his own time,† which will remind the reader of Saul and David at Gilgal:—" There is a huge round stone, having *about twelve* lesser stones lying near it, with wedge-fashioned stones raised a little from the earth, not far from the metropolis of Upsal, called Morasten. Upon which a new king to be chosen, is received by an infinite company of people that are present, and afterward *is confirmed* with more solemn ceremonies by the Catholic bishop taking an oath before him to defend the faith."‡

In our own country the Bardic successors of the Druids preserved many of the ideas and usages of their predecessors, and have transmitted them in writing. Thus, according to Meagant, one of this race who lived in the seventh century, the Bards had their hill of legislation, or sacred mount, where the ancient judges of the land assembled to decide the causes of the people.§ In another poem, by Cynddela, we find the following allusion to the Druids and their sacred mounts:—" Bards were constituted the judges of excellence, and bards will praise thee, *even Druids of the circle*, of four dialects, coming from the four regions. A bard of the steep mount will celebrate thee, even Cynddela, the first object in the gate."‖ In another passage the same poet exclaims, " It is my right to be master of song, being in a direct line of the true tribe—*a bard of the enclosure*."

Sir R. C. Hoare, who adduces these bardic illustrations from the curious book of Davies, observes, " All these allusions strongly prove

* Pinkerton, 'Description of Empires,' 1802.

† He died in 1558.

‡ 'Hist. of the Goths,' pp. 12, 13.

§ Davies's 'Mythology of the Druids,' p. 6.

‖ Ibid. p. 12.

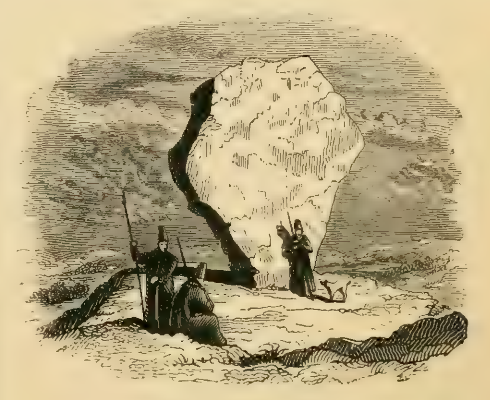
that the circle, the enclosure, and the mount, such as we still see at Abury, Marden, and Stonehenge, were connected first with the Druidical and afterwards with the Bardic system, and were made use of for the joint purposes of religion and judicature. The Druids officiated in them as ministers of religion and of justice. They were national edifices, constructed according to the rude fashion of the times, and at a period when the Deity was worshipped in the most simple and primitive manner, under the open canopy of heaven, not in stately covered temples."*

Travellers in the East appear generally to have been too little conversant with this very interesting branch of antiquities, to make those recognitions by which our information might have been greatly extended. That such do exist in that quarter of the world we doubt not, but they have either not been seen, or, being seen, their proper character has not been distinguished. What might be found by adequate attention is shown by the instances found in Persia by Sir William Ouseley.

Chardin, travelling in Media (from Tabriz), observed circles of large stones, and understood that the tradition concerning them was, that they were set up when Kai-kous, making war in Media, *held his councils of war* in this place; and that it was then the custom for each officer who came to the council to bring a stone to serve for his seat. Chardin remarks that these stones are so large that eight men could not move them without difficulty, and that they could not have been brought from any nearer place than the mountains, six leagues distant.† Kai-kous belongs to the fabulous age of Persian history—the age of giants: and Mr. King, who was aware of this case, justly remarks that a very high antiquity is ascribed to them by the reference to so remote an origin. What is most remarkable is, however, that we find, even here, the idea of the use of such monuments for councils, whether the particular monument be of the class which we are seeking or not. Sir W. Ouseley thinks that it is not.

Sir William himself, however, found elsewhere monuments in the same country, which unquestionably do supply illustrations of our present subject. In Fars, the *southern* province of Persia, he found a single upright stone, between ten and eleven feet high, and three feet six or seven inches broad (on each side) in the lower part, but not quite so much above. As this had a cavity at the top, he considers it a fire-altar. It is surrounded by a rude low wall, or fence of large stones, which enclose the altar, having a narrow entrance on the south. Towards the east and north, this enclosure is partly formed of two or three stones of very considerable dimensions; and these, at the first and distant view, brought to Sir William's recollection the various "Druidical" remains which he had seen in Wales and Ireland. The natives acknowledge in this altar a memorial of their ancient religion, as is evident from the name they give to it, *Sang-i-Atish Kadah*, or "Stone of the Fire Temple." It will be remembered that the ancient Persians were worshippers of the sun, and of fire as its representative; and it is remarkable that, without being aware of the form borne by the open fire temples of Persia, many writers on Druidical remains have, on no slight grounds, concluded that the open circular or oval temples which have engaged our attention were dedicated to the same worship. "Near this monument of times long past," says our traveller, "were a few trees: none remarkable either for size or luxuriant foliage, but most apparently old. I fancied they might represent one of those sacred groves formerly attached to religious structures, and in earlier ages almost considered as constituting of themselves a temple. Among the trees appeared a *dirakht i fazl*, the branches of which were thickly hung with rags, as high as a man could conveniently raise his hand: this being one of the holy trees on which votive offerings are suspended by the Persians."*

In the same province, not far from *Darab*, is an extensive piece of ground, enclosed by a ditch extremely wide and deep, and by a bank or rampart of earth proportionably high. Within this enclosure is an extraordinary upright stone, at least twenty feet high, which is



[Druidic Stone in Persia.]

* 'History of Ancient Wiltshire,' p. 112.
† 'Voyages,' ii. 363, Langles' Edit.

* 'Travels,' ii. 80-83.

held in superstitious veneration by the natives. In another part of this enclosed space, upon a rising ground, are several large and rude stones, forming a cluster irregularly circular, which, observes the traveller, "from its appearance, a British antiquary might be almost authorised to pronounce Druidical, according to the general application of this word among us. I can scarcely think the arrangement of those stones wholly, though it may be partly, natural or accidental. Some of them are from twenty to twenty-five feet high; one, very tall, stands nearly in the middle; another, towards the west, resembles a table or an altar, being flat at the top, and under two or three are recesses or small caverns."*

This monument is much more interesting than Sir W. Ouseley (who acknowledges an imperfect acquaintance with this branch of antiquities) seems to have imagined. The altar, the pillar, &c., offer clear analogies not only to the Scriptural instances, but to those which our own country offer, proving the common origin and use of these monuments of the most ancient times.

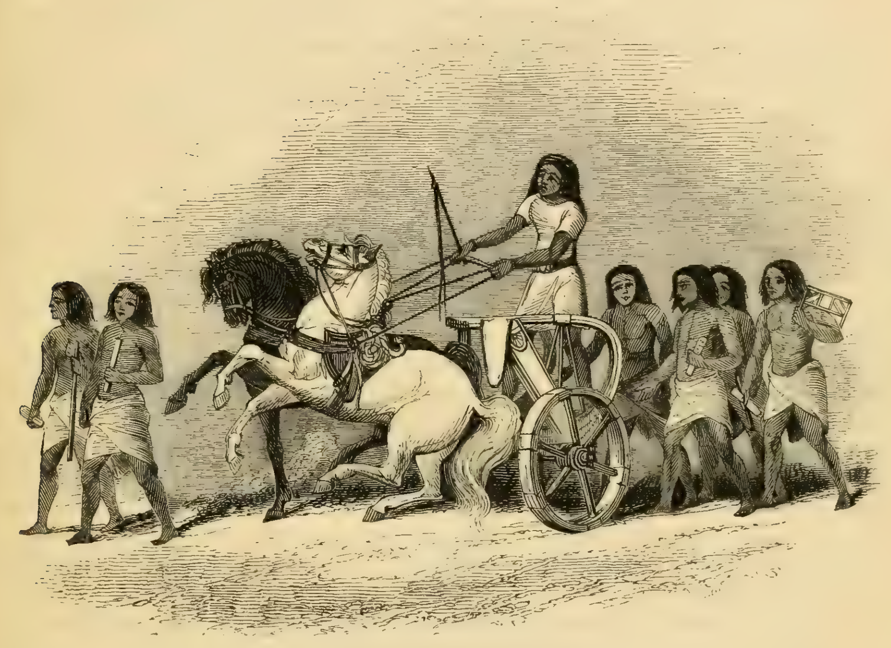
* 'Travels,' ii. 124.



[Druidic Circle at Darab.]

CHAPTER IV.

ELI AND SAMUEL.



[Runners attending a Chariot.]

SAMSON was the last of the military heroes stirred up to deliver Israel from its oppressors. The two that followed, Eli and Samuel, were men of peace—the one a priest and the other a Levite.

In the absence of a person specially called and appointed to deliver and judge the people, the civil government, by the principles of the theocracy, devolved on the high-priest, as the vizier of the Great King, having access to his presence and being the interpreter of his will. It is not easy to see that Samson exercised the civil government over any of the tribes. And although, therefore, in order to carry on the succession of times, it is convenient to say that at his death the government devolved on the high-priest, yet, in fact, there is little reason to question that the high-priest exercised as much authority before as after. But in such times as these that authority was but small; and chiefly, as it would appear, judicial, particularly in adjusting disputes between persons of different tribes. The heads of the several tribes seem to have considered themselves fully competent to manage their internal affairs; and their divided allegiance to Jehovah involved the political evil, that the authority of the general government was proportionably weakened, and the cohesion of the tribes in the same degree relaxed. Subject to this preliminary observation, the high-priest may, for historical convenience, be considered the successor of Samson.

It is remarkable that functionaries so important, in the theory of the Hebrew constitution, as the high-priests, are scarcely noticed in the history of the Judges. From Phineas, the grandson of Aaron, to Eli, a high-priest is not mentioned on any occasion, nor would even their names be known but for the list in Chronicles* where the order is thus given:—

Abishua, Bukki, Uzzi, Zerahiah, Meraioth.

In the person of Eli, a change in the line of succession to this high office took place; as he was the first of the race of Ithamar, the second son of Aaron. But as the line of his elder son Eleazer was not extinct, and as the cause of the change is not assigned, some difficulty has been experienced in accounting for it. The Jews, as we have seen, suppose that it was because the existing pontiff had not taken measures sufficiently active to prevent Jephthah from sacrificing his daughter. But if, in the absence of all positive information, a conjecture might be hazarded, we would suggest the probability that the last pontiff of Eleazar's line died leaving no son old enough to take the office, and that it then (as afterwards in the succession to the kingdom) devolved on his adult uncle or cousin of the line of Ithamar. Such a course resorted to in temporal successions to avoid the evils of a minority and regency, must have been much more necessary in the case of the high-priesthood. That the change took place in some such natural and quiet way, seems to afford the most satisfactory explanation of the silence of the record of a matter of such importance.

Eli was a good and pious man, estimable in private life for his many virtues and the mildness of his character; but he was greatly wanting in those sterner virtues which became his public station, and which were indeed necessary for the repression of wickedness and the punishment of the wrong doer. As he grew old, he devolved much of his public duty upon his sons Hophni and Phineas, two evil-disposed men, who possessed the energy their father lacked, without any of his virtues. Even in their sacred ministrations at the tabernacle, their conduct was so shamefully signalised by rapacity and licentiousness, that the people, through their misconduct, were led to abhor the offering of Jehovah. All this became known to Eli; but, instead of taking the immediate and decisive measures which became his station, he contented himself with a mild and ineffective remonstrance. This weakness of Eli was justly counted a sin in that venerable person; and a prophet was commissioned to warn him of the evil consequences, which were no less than the exclusion of his race from the pontificate to which he had been advanced. But even this could not rouse the old man to the exertion which became his station; but he seems rather to have acquiesced in this judgment as a thing not to be averted.

The next reproof which this remiss judge received was through an unexpected channel.

At the tabernacle, in personal attendance upon the high-priest, was a boy, a Levite, who having been the child signally granted in answer to the many prayers of Hannah, his previously barren mother, was by her consecrated from the womb, as a Nazarite, to Jehovah. In consequence of this, combined with his Levitical character, he had been left at the tabernacle as early as he could be separated from his mother's care, to render such services there as his tender years allowed. His name was Samuel: and as his pious mother came to Shiloh yearly with her husband to celebrate the passover (bringing with her a dress for her son), she had the delight of perceiving that he, growing up under the shadow of the altar, conducted himself with such propriety and discretion, that he stood very high in the favour of God and man. That he was thus, from his very infancy, constantly before the eyes of the people when they attended at the tabernacle, doubtless went far to prepare the way for that influence and station which he ultimately attained.

It was the thirty-first year of Eli's administration, when Samuel, then twelve years of age, lay on his bed at night, that he heard a voice calling him by his name. He supposed that it was Eli who had called, he hastened to him, but found that it was not so. This was repeated three times; and at the third time Eli concluding that it was the Lord who had called the lad, instructed him to answer, "Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth." Samuel obeyed,

* 1 Chron. vi. 4—16, 50—52.

and the Voice then delivered to him, as an irrevocable doom, the former denunciations against Eli's house, " because his sons have made themselves vile, *and he restrained them not* ;" declaring that he would " do a thing in Israel at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle." In the morning, the lad, being pressed by Eli, delivered to him the message he had received. But even this only gave occasion for the further manifestation of the passive virtues of his character,—" It is Jehovah," he said; " let him do what seemeth to him good."

After this, matters went on for some time, much as they had done. Eli's sons pursued their old courses, making themselves still more vile; and their father, though now well aware of the doom which hung over himself and them, took no measures in the hope to avert it. But as Samuel grew, the word of the Lord again came to him from time to time, and all Israel knew that he was established to be a prophet of Jehovah.

Thus passed ten years, at the end of which the threatened judgments began to be inflicted upon the house of Eli. At that time the Israelites rashly, and without consulting their Divine King, embarked in a war with the Philistines. In the forty years since the death of Samson, this people had recruited their strength, and recovered the courage of which they appear to have been for a season deprived by the astounding calamity which swept away so many of their chiefs and nobles. In the first engagement the Israelites were defeated, with the loss of 4000 men. On this they sent to Shiloh for the ark of the covenant, not doubting of victory under its protection. The two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phineas, attended it to the camp. On its arrival there, " all Israel shouted with a great shout, so that the earth rang again." On hearing this, and being apprised of its cause, the Philistines were filled with consternation; and the manner in which their alarm was expressed affords a very clear indication of the effect which had been produced on their minds, by the wonders which Jehovah had wrought for the deliverance and protection of Israel. " Woe unto us!" they cried; " who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty Gods? These are the Gods that smote the Egyptians, with all the plagues of the wilderness." The procedure itself did not strike them as strange,—for it was not unusual among ancient nations to take their gods to their wars,—and the ark with its cherubim the Philistines supposed to be the god of the Hebrews. They did not question the existence of that God or his special care for his people; neither did they deny his power, of which indeed they were afraid. They allowed Jehovah to be the god of the Hebrews, in the same sense in which they regarded Dagon to be their own god. It was his universal and exclusive power that they denied, or rather did not recognise.

Notwithstanding their alarm, the Philistines did not give way to despair; but like a brave people, which they were always, the imminence of the danger only stimulated them to the more strenuous exertions for victory. They cried to one another, " Be strong, and quit yourselves like men, O ye Philistines, that ye become not servants unto the Hebrews, as they have been to you! Quit yourselves like men, and fight!"

They fought: and the victory was given to them, to punish the Hebrews for their misdoings, and for having engaged in this war without consulting their King, as well as to teach them that undue confidence in the ark itself was a superstition, if not an idolatry, apart from a due reliance on God himself, whose footstool only the ark was. Thirty thousand men of Israel fell in the battle and pursuit; the guilty sons of Eli were among the slain, and *the ark itself was taken.*

Eli, blind and old, remained at Shiloh, anxiously expecting news from the camp; " for his heart trembled for the ark of God;" and that he might be in the way of receiving the earliest rumours from the war, he sat watching by the way-side. One day he heard an outcry in the town, which had been occasioned by the news brought by one of the fugitives from the battle. This man, with his clothes rent and dust upon his head, soon came before the high-priest and gave to him the tidings,—that Israel fled before the Philistines—that there had been a great slaughter—that his two sons, Hophni and Phineas, were slain—and that the ark of God was taken! No sooner had the last words passed the lips of the messenger, than the high-priest fell backward from off his seat;(1) and being old and heavy, his neck was broken in the fall.

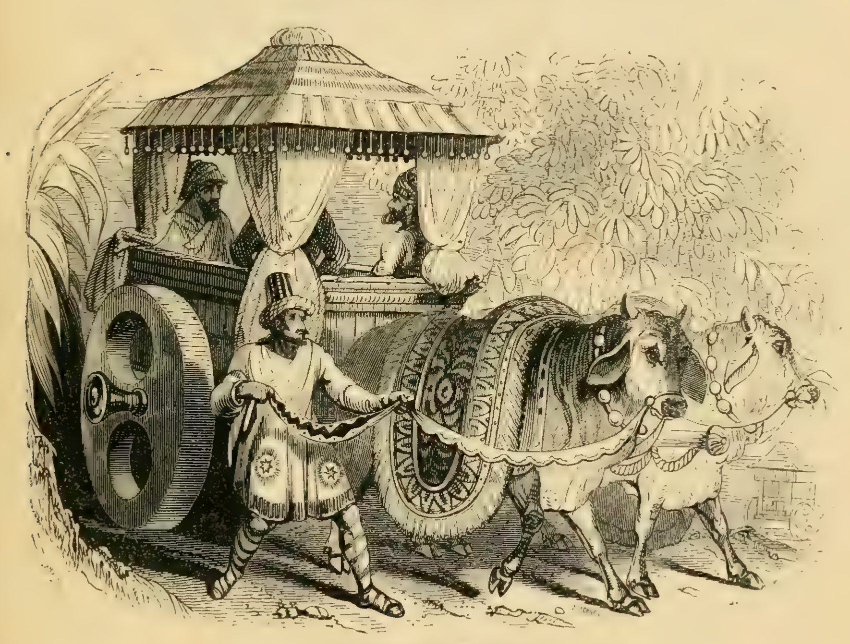
Soon after the news of all these calamities was carried to the wife of Phineas; on hearing which she was taken with the pains of labour, and died, after she had looked upon the son to whom she gave birth, and given him the sad name of Ichabod [*Inglorious*]; for she said, "The glory is departed from Israel; for the ark of Jehovah, the God of Israel, is taken." These incidents serve to evince the depth of that astonishment and grief with which the loss of the ark was regarded.

The Philistines soon found that they had small cause to rejoice in the glorious trophy they had won: and most convincingly was it made known to them that the Israelites had been defeated for the punishment of their sins, which rendered them unworthy of their God's protection, and not through His want of power to save. The Philistines certainly considered that they had taken captive the God of the Hebrews, and could, on the principles of pagan idolatry, hardly fail to attribute it to the superior power of Dagon, their own god. Yet they still must have had a very salutary dread of the God of Israel; and while they could not but regard the ark as the proudest of their trophies, it was probably more with the view of propitiating him, by associating him with their own god, than by way of insult, that they deposited the conquered ark in the temple of their Dagon at Azotus. But God disdained this dishonouring alliance; and twice the Philistines found their idol overthrown, and the second time broken to pieces, before the ark of God. And further to demonstrate His power in such a way as might include a punishment for their idolatry and for the abominations connected with it, the Lord smote the people of the place with hemorrhoids, or the piles, with a mortal destruction. The land also swarmed with jerboas, whereby the products of the fields were consumed. Attributing these calamities to the presence of the ark, they sent it to Gath, where it remained until the pressure of the same inflictions compelled them to send it from them. It was taken to Ekron, another of the five metropolitan cities of Philistia. The Ekronites received it with terror, crying, "They have brought round to us the ark of the God of Israel to slay us and our people." They therefore in an assembly of "the lords of the Philistines" proposed that the ark should be sent back to its own place in the land of Israel. This was determined; nor was the determination too soon, for already the hand of God was so heavy upon Ekron, that "the cry of the city went up to the heavens." And that it might be sent away with all honour, the diviners, who were consulted as to the best means of giving effect to the intention which had been formed, counselled that five golden hemorrhoids, and five golden mice, one from each of the Philistine states, should be deposited in a coffer beside the ark, as a trespass-offering: for even thus early the custom had come into use of making votive offerings representing the instruments of affliction, or of the parts afflicted, to the god to whom the infliction or the cure was attributed. That they might give the glory to the God of Israel, and not harden their hearts as did the Egyptians, and thereby bring upon themselves the punishments of that people, were the reasons by which this course of conduct was enforced. And they are remarkable as showing the effect, even at this remote date, upon the neighbouring nations, of the wonders of judgment and deliverance which had been wrought in the land of Egypt.

To testify all possible respect, the ark was placed in a new car,(2) to which were yoked two kine, whose necks had never before been subjected to the yoke. Their calves were tied up at home; and, by the advice of the priests, it was concluded to leave the cows free to take their own course;—if the animals went away from their calves to the land of Israel, it was to be inferred that a right judgment had been formed of the cause from which their calamities proceeded; but if not, they might conclude that it had been the result of natural causes. From such incidents the heathen were even thus early accustomed to conjecture the will of their gods. In this case, no sooner were the kine set free than they turned their backs upon their young, and took the road towards the town of Bethshemesh in Judah, being the nearest city of the Levites towards the Philistine frontier. It was the time of the wheat-harvest, when the people of the town were abroad in the valley reaping the fruits of their fields. They beheld the ark advancing with great gladness; and when the kine stopped of their own accord, near a great stone, in a field belonging to one Joshua, the Levites who were present detached them from the car, and offered them up in sacrifice upon that stone before the ark. And the



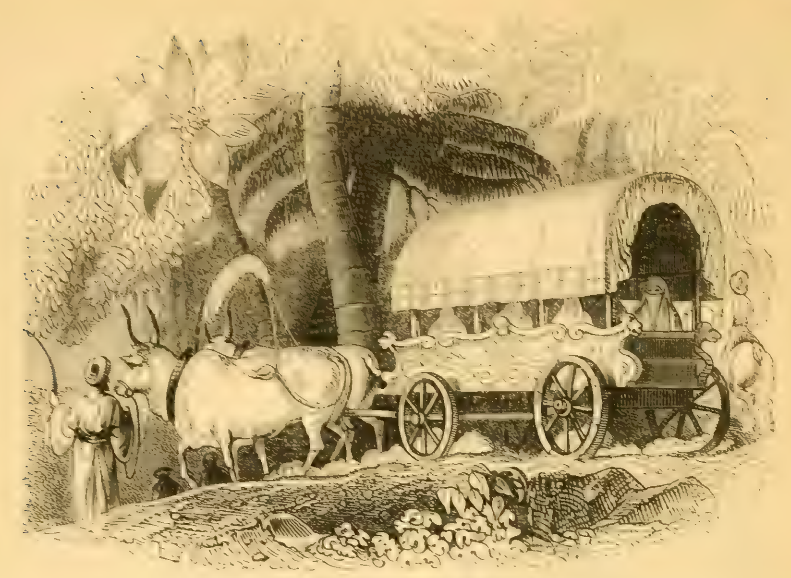
[Ethiopian Car drawn by Oxen.]



[Indian Car drawn by Oxen.]

stone being thus consecrated by sacrifice, the ark was removed from the car and deposited thereon. The five lords of the Philistines, who had followed the car to the borders of Bethshemesh (which was twelve miles distant from Ekron), and had stood witnessing these proceedings, now returned home, well convinced that it was the hand of the God of Israel by which they had been smitten. The ark had been in their hands seven months.

The adventures of the ark, and its constant exposure to their sight, begat in the Bethshemites a familiarity towards it, inconsistent with the respect due to Jehovah, and which it was highly necessary to repress. When therefore their familiarity went so far that they ventured to raise the cover of the ark, to gratify their curiosity with a view of its contents, sixty of their number—principal persons of the place—were smitten with death. On this the people cried, with great consternation, " Who is able to stand before this holy God, Jehovah? and to whom shall he go from us?" They decided to invite the people of Kirjath-jearim to take



[Turkish Arabah drawn by Oxen.]

the ark away. They did so, and deposited it in the house of Abinadab "upon the hill." This person set apart his son Eleazer to take the charge of it—to preserve it from pollution, and to keep all things clean and orderly about it. Thus it remained about eighty-two years. Why it was not returned to Shiloh does not very clearly appear. Probably no command on the subject was given; and from the experience which the Israelites now had of the jealousy with which its sanctity was guarded, they were afraid to remove it without express orders. Besides, at this time the people were again far gone into idolatrous practices, which made them comparatively indifferent about the ark; and it is not unlikely that the reaction of the sentiment of astonishment and grief with which its loss had been regarded, did much to impair that veneration of which it had been the object. Add to this that they had been without the ark for seven months, in the course of which they had accustomed their minds to the want of it, and had learned to regard it as less essential to them than it had before seemed. The tabernacle still remained at Shiloh, which continued to be the seat of the appointed ministrations, until it was removed, in the reign of Saul, to Nob, probably in consequence of the destruction of Shiloh in the Philistine war.*

For their idolatries and alienation, the Hebrews were punished by twenty years continuance [including the seven months of the ark's absence] of their subjection to the Philistines.

It is usually stated that Samuel succeeded Eli. He was then little more than twenty years of age; and although, as his years advanced, he doubtless acquired much authority among the people from the influence of his character and position, there is no evidence that it was any other than that which prophets usually exercised. It rather appears from the text that it was *after* the twenty years of further servitude to the Philistines, that Samuel was publicly called to assume the civil government.

At the end of these twenty years the people "lamented after the Lord," or repented of the sins by which they had alienated themselves from him, and were disposed to return to their allegiance. Samuel then came forward in his prophetic character, and promised them deliverance from the Philistines, if they would put away the strange gods—the Baals and Ashtaroths (representing the sun and moon), and devote themselves to the exclusive service of Jehovah. His directions were followed; and he then convened an assembly of all Israel at Mizpeh, where they held a solemn fast and humiliation for their sins, and poured out water

* 1 Sam. xiv. 3; Jer. vii. 12—14, xxvi. 6—9.

before Jehovah, as expressive of their despondency or grief. And to testify their good intentions for the future, the prophet himself was there invested by them with the authority of a "judge."

The Philistines took umbrage at this great assembly in Mizpeh, which, they rightly judged, boded no good to the continuance of their dominion. They assembled their forces and marched to that place, to disperse the congregation. The people, not being prepared for war, were filled with alarm on the approach of their enemies, and besought Samuel to cry to Jehovah for them, that he might save them from the hand of the Philistines. Samuel did so with great earnestness; and he was in the act of offering up a lamb as a burnt-offering, when the Philistines drew near to battle. The prayers of the prophet were then answered by a terrible storm of thunder and lightning, by which the enemy were alarmed and confounded, while the Israelites, recognising the sign, were inspired with sudden and indomitable courage. They fell impetuously upon the force they had so lately dreaded, and slew vast numbers of them, chasing the remainder as far as Bethcar. In memory of this great victory, Samuel set up a memorial-stone, and gave it the name of Ebenezer (*the help-stone*), saying, "Hitherto Jehovah hath *helped* us."

This very brilliant victory broke the spirit of the Philistines for many years. They were obliged to restore all their conquests from the Israelites; and, for many years to come, they kept carefully within their own territories, and abstained from any hostile acts against the Hebrews. Their example was followed by the other neighbours of Israel, which hence enjoyed the felicity of a profound peace during the entire period of Samuel's sole administration.

This excellent judge administered justice regularly to the tribes in his annual circuit, which he took to the places of sacred stones at Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and constantly at his own place of abode at Ramah, where he built an altar to Jehovah. This was probably by the Divine permission or direction, at least for the present, as God had not yet given any declaration where the ark was to be fixed.

The sole administration of Samuel lasted twelve years, dating it, as we do, from the end of the Philistine servitude, and not from the death of Eli. Near the close of this period, when the prophet was "growing old and gray-headed," being sixty-four years of age, he appointed his sons, Joel and Abiah, to act for him at Bethel and Beersheba. But they walked not in the steps of their father. "They turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment."

This misconduct of his sons, with his own advancing age, and the seemingly unsettled state in which the government would be left at his death, were among the causes which at this time induced the elders of Israel to resort to Samuel at Ramah, and to demand of him that a king should be appointed to reign over them, as in other nations.

The causes which we have just stated, together with the regular administration of justice to which Samuel had accustomed them, occasioned the demand, it would seem, *at this particular time*; but there were deeper causes which would unquestionably have brought them to this point ere long, if it had not now. These causes have been well discriminated by Jahn.

This able writer justly refers the frequent interruptions to the welfare of the Hebrew state under the judges to—"1. The effeminacy and cowardice of the people; and, 2. To the disunion and jealousy of the tribes, who never assisted each other with the requisite zeal and alacrity. But as this effeminacy arose from the vices of idolatry, and their cowardice from a want of confidence in Jehovah; so the disunion and jealousy of the tribes, though selfishness was the immediate cause, arose from a disposition to neglect their Divine King, and not to consider themselves as the united and only people of Jehovah. This disposition, if it did not originate from, was at least very much heightened by the multiplication of deities. Thus both these causes of their misfortunes owed their origin to idolatry, that great cause of all their calamities, so often mentioned in the sanctions of the law. Thus the people, by increasing their gods, enervated themselves, and prepared for themselves those sufferings and chastisements by which they were again to be brought back to their King, JEHOVAH."

He proceeds to observe that "These causes of national misfortune were all in operation at the time of Samuel, and threatened to produce after his death still greater calamities. The

tribes beyond the Jordan had formidable enemies in the Ammonites and the southern tribes in the Philistines, while the northern tribes stood aloof from the dangers of their more exposed countrymen. The latter seems to have been the principal reason why the rulers in general assembly requested a king. The tribes in southern Palestine and beyond the Jordan were the most earnest for this change in the government; they feared that the death of Samuel would leave them without a supreme magistrate, and that the nation being again disunited, they should be left to their fate. The degeneracy of Samuel's sons, who had been appointed subordinate judges, or deputies, increased their apprehensions. They, therefore, strenuously insisted on their demand, "Nay, but we will have a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations." They had reason to hope that a king invested with supreme authority might be able to unite the power of the whole nation and protect each tribe with the collected strength of all; that under him the affairs of government would be more promptly administered and necessary aid more readily afforded; that if he were a man devoted to Jehovah, he could more effectually repress or prevent idolatry, and thus place the welfare of the state on a more solid foundation. They might imagine themselves justified in this request as Moses had taken it for granted that the nation would eventually have a king, and the same thing had been promised to their great progenitor Abraham. It conduces greatly to the honour of the Hebrews that they attempted this change in their constitution, not by their own power, but in accordance with the principles of the theocracy; they requested it of their King, Jehovah, by the intervention of a prophet, and they effected it without bloodshed,—a manifest proof that the time of the judges was neither what is usually understood by a 'barbarous' nor a 'heroic age.'"

But as all the objects which they desired to realise were attainable under the theocracy, were they but faithful to its principles and engagements; and as the unseen King, Jehovah, would necessarily be obscured by a subordinate, visible monarch, He, by means of Samuel, gave the rulers to understand his disapprobation of their request; and at the same time represented to them the burdens they would have to bear under a king, especially how easily he might be led to imitate other Oriental monarchs, and to disregard the law of Jehovah.

The picture which was then drawn by Samuel exhibits in a lively manner the character of the monarchies which at that time existed in the East, and enables us to ascertain that, whatever changes may have taken place in particular states, the monarchical principle as it then existed has been preserved to this day in its full vigour in the East. This is so true, that there is no royal usage mentioned by Samuel which may not be illustrated and explained from the modern sovereignties of that part of the world. The statement must have seemed the more effective from the implied contrast to the mild and gentle character of that service which the Lord, as king of Israel, had required. Samuel reminded them that their kings would soon fall into the state of other monarchs, to support which the heaviest exactions upon their persons and estates would become necessary. He would take their young men and employ them as charioteers and horsemen, and even (according to the Egyptian custom) as runners before and about his chariot. A standing army would deprive them of the valuable services of their young men; and if this were not enough, the king of a future day would "take them to till *his* ground and to make *his* instruments of war and the furniture of *his* chariots. In like manner the daughters of Israel, who should marry and bring up children, would be largely taken to minister to the luxury of the court as "confectioners and bakers." Nor would he much scruple to take the chosen and best of their male and female slaves, as well as their labouring cattle, and "put them to his own work." And then to support his expenses, the heaviest exactions would be necessary; and although the kingly *tenth* were already appropriated to Jehovah, the Divine King, not the less would their human king exact his kingly dues; thus, in fact, rendering their burdens greater than those of any other nation. A clear intimation was also given them of the danger to which their landed possessions would be ultimately exposed under the form of government which they so much desired. For the expression, "He will take the best of your fields, and of your vineyards, and of your olive-yards, and give them to his servants," manifestly refers to the fact that inasmuch as their true king, Jehovah, was the sovereign pro-

prietor of the soil, and as such had long before distributed the whole in inalienable estates among the people; whatever human king they might have, would necessarily stand in the, then and there, peculiar position, being only a civil governor, and not, like the neighbouring king, also the territorial sovereign; and that hence, wanting the means of providing for his family and servants which other kings possessed, he would be tempted to avail himself of all kinds of pretences to dispossess them of the lands which they held from their Divine King. " His servants ye will become," concludes the prophet. " And ye shall cry out in that day because of the king that ye have chosen: but JEHOVAH will not hear you in that day."

The purpose of the people was, however, too firmly fixed to be shaken even by this discouraging representation. An acquiescence in their demand was therefore reluctantly conceded, probably, as Jahn conjectures, " Because the desired change was requested of the invisible King in a lawful manner, through the mediation of his prophet, and because, in the present disposition of the nation, it might be effected without bloodshed. If the remark of Polybius be in all cases true, that 'all aristocracies and democracies terminate at last in monarchy,'* this change must have taken place in some future time, and perhaps might have been attended with civil war.

" By this alteration of the constitution the theocracy was indeed thrown somewhat into the shade, as it was no longer so manifest that God was the king of the Hebrews. Still, however, as the principles of the theocracy were interwoven with the fundamental and unchangeable laws of the state, their influence did not entirely cease, but the elected king was to act as the viceroy and vassal of Jehovah. On this account Moses had already established the following regulations:—†

" 1. That the Hebrews, whenever they adopted the monarchical form of government, should raise only those to the throne, who were chosen by Jehovah himself. As monarchs (called kings of kings) were accustomed to appoint sub-kings, or viceroys, in the several provinces of their dominions, so was the king of the Hebrews to be called to the throne by Jehovah, to receive the kingdom from him, and in all respects to consider himself as his representative, viceroy, and vassal. On this occasion the will of Jehovah was to be made known by a prophet, or by means of Urim and Thummim, and the viceroy elect was to prove himself an instrument of God by protecting the commonwealth against its foes. The succession of the royal house was to depend on the will of God, to be made known by his prophets.

" 2. Moses had likewise ordained that the new king should be a native Israelite. Thus foreigners were excluded from the throne, even though they should be proposed by false prophets; for being heathens, they might transgress the fundamental law of the state by the introduction of idolatry; or, at least, it might be difficult for them to rule in all respects as the vassals of Jehovah. This regulation had reference merely to free elections, and was by no means to be understood, as it was explained by Judas of Galilee ‡ and the Zealots during the last war with the Romans, that the Hebrews were not to submit to these foreign powers, under whose dominion they were brought by an all-directing Providence. On the contrary, Moses himself had predicted such events, and Jeremiah and Ezekiel earnestly exhorted their countrymen to surrender quietly to the Chaldeans."§

Upon such conditions the choice of a king was permitted, according to law; and in the year 1110, B.C., 538 years after the exode, the first election took place.

Saul, the son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin, went forth about this time with a servant to seek some strayed asses belonging to his father. For three days the search was fruitless; and then finding himself near Ramah, the stated residence of Samuel, he resolved to go and consult him; for it was known to all Israel that nothing was hidden from the man of God. According to the still subsisting custom of the East, no one could, with the least propriety, present himself before a man in authority, and still less before a person of so sacred a character as Samuel bore, without some present, however small, in token of his respect and homage.

* Hist. lib. v. 6, 7. † Deut. xvii. 14—20. ‡ Acts v. 37.

§ In the preceding paragraphs, all the passages marked as quotations are from Jahn, book iii. sect. 23, book iv. sects. 24, 25.

But although the toil and travel-stained stranger who appeared before the prophet could only lay before him the worth of seven-pence halfpenny in silver, he was received with particular notice and honour; for it had been specially revealed to Samuel that on that day and at that hour the destined king of Israel would present himself before him. The prophet assured Saul that his father had found the asses, and began now to be anxious about his son. Nevertheless, he urged him to stay with him over the night, and partake of a feast which he had provided; at the same time conveying to him a slight intimation of the splendid fortunes which were in store for him; to which, with modest self-withdrawment, Saul replied, "Am not I a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? Wherefore then speakest thou so to me?" Part of this must be attributed to the Oriental forms of self-detraction; for although Benjamin was certainly the smallest of the tribes—as it had not recovered the serious blow inflicted by all the other tribes—it appears from the history that the family of Kish was of some consideration in Benjamin.

In consequence of the intimation he had previously received, Samuel had against this time prepared an entertainment, to which thirty principal persons of the place had been invited. Samuel conducted the stranger to the room in which these guests were assembled, and led him to the corner-seat of honour; and when the meat was served, directed the most honourable joint—the shoulder—to be set before him.

Being summer, the bed for Saul was made on the house-top; and before he lay down, Samuel communed with him there, probably to ascertain his sentiments and character, and to acquaint him with the true nature of that form of kingly government which he was destined to establish. Early in the morning the prophet called Saul to depart, and walked forth with him. After a time Samuel directed the servant to pass on before; and then the prophet, desiring Saul to stand still that he might show him the purposes of God, produced a vial of oil, and poured it upon his head, thus anointing him "captain over the Lord's inheritance." He then kissed



[A Meeting near Mount Tabor.]

him, and to confirm his faith, proceeded to tell him all the incidents that would occur to him during his journey home, and to encourage him, under the sense he entertained of his own inferior claims to such a distinction, assured him that on the way, and through the Divine influence, the needful qualifications should grow upon him, so that he should seem to receive another * heart and to become another man.

On his way home all happened to Saul which the prophet had foreshown; and some of the incidents are too illustrative of the manners of the time to pass unnoticed. In the plain of Tabor he was met by three men who were proceeding to the place of sacred stones in Bethel, to worship God there. One of them carried three kids, intended as a sacrifice for each of their number; another had three loaves of bread; and the third a leather bottle of wine, all evidently intended to be used with the flesh of the kids in an offering-feast. They gave Saul the salutation of peace—such as travellers give each other by the way—probably the usual " Peace be unto thee!" which is no other than the common *Salam aleikoom* of the modern East; and they gave him two of the three loaves of bread which they had with them.

As Saul went on to Gibeah in Benjamin, which seems to have been called " the hill of God," either because there was here a " high-place " consecrated to the worship of God, or because it was the seat of a " school of the prophets," or a kind of college where young men were instructed in the duties of religion, in the knowledge of the law, in psalmody and other religious exercises. Or it may have been so called for *both* these reasons, for both existed. As Saul drew nigh he perceived a company of these prophets returning from the high-place, where they had been to worship; and as they went they sang the praises of God to the sound of the psaltery, the tabret, the pipe, and the harp. As they drew nigh, the spirit of God came upon him, as Samuel had predicted, and he became as another man. He joined the



[A Musical Procession.†]

* *Another*, not *new*; a distinction which, from the Scriptural acceptation of the word new, together with the after conduct of Saul, it may be important to note.

† In this engraving *ancient* musical instruments have been introduced (from Egyptian sources) for the sake of more effective illustration.

prophets, and sang the praises of God with them. And when those to whom he was known (for this was in his own tribe and neighbourhood) witnessed this sudden endowment of the untaught husbandman, they were much astonished, and said one to another, "What is this that is come unto the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?" Whence this last expression passed into a proverb, applied to one found in society with which his previous habits had not prepared him to mingle. It may be seen, however, that this incident would serve in a very conspicuous manner to direct attention to the person and character of Saul.

Samuel, in parting from Saul, had appointed a future meeting at Gilgal, to which place of sacred stones he convoked all Israel for the election of a king. As on other occasions, the choice of God was to be manifested by lot, which would also tend to prevent jealousies and the suspicion of partiality on the part of Samuel. In the usual manner of successive indications,* the tribe of Benjamin was taken by the lot from the several tribes; then the family of Matri from the families of that tribe; then the house of Kish from the family of Matri; and, lastly, Saul from the household of Kish. But Saul was not to be found. Well assured of the result, he had not formed one in the assembly, but had, from modesty, kept himself apart among the baggage. When his retreat was discovered, he was led forward into the midst of the congregation; and the mass of the people observed with complacency that the elected king was of most noble presence, in the full prime of life, comely and tall, being higher by the head and shoulders than any of those among whom he stood. On such a man, in a rude age, when personal qualities are the most valued, the suffrages of all men would have centred, regarding him as pointed out by nature for rule and dominion. And so far did this feeling operate even on Samuel, that with evident pride that, since there must be a king, the divine choice had fallen on one who must seem in the eyes of all men so well qualified to dignify his high office, he thus proclaimed him to the people, " See ye him whom Jehovah hath chosen, *that there is none like him among all the people*." And the people, responding to that feeling, raised at once the shout of recognition, " Long live the king!"

In concluding the present Book, we are reluctant to withhold from the reader the very interesting survey which Jahn has taken of the office of the judges, and of the condition of Israel under their administration. This survey is embodied in the ensuing paragraphs, but having modified several passages to suit them to the views which we have ourselves developed, we abstain from giving them the form of a direct quotation.

From what has been already said respecting the judges and their achievements, we can ascertain, with a tolerable degree of certainty, the nature of their office. Most of them indeed had been at the head of armies, and delivered their country from foreign oppression: Eli and Samuel, however, were not military men. Deborah was judge before she planned the war against Jabin; and of Jair, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon, it is at least uncertain whether they ever held any military command. Judges are mentioned in the Mosaic law, in connection with the high-priest, as arbiters of civil controversies, without any allusion to war.† In like manner, the judges who were appointed over Tyre after king Baal were certainly not military officers, for the city was at that time tributary to Babylon. The command of the army can therefore be scarcely considered as the peculiar distinction of these magistrates. But as in ancient times the duties of a judge were reckoned among the first and most important duties of a ruler, so the Hebrew judges appear to have been appointed for the general administration of public affairs, and the command of the army fell to them as the supreme executive officers. In many cases, it is true, military achievements were the means whereby men elevated themselves to the rank of judges; but our inquiry is, not how the office was obtained, but for what purposes it was instituted. It may, however, be proper to recollect that Jephthah and Samuel, and, for aught that appears, Jair, Elon, Ibzan, and Abdon, were raised to this office by the free unsolicited voice of the people.

The office of these judges or regents was held during life, but it was not hereditary, neither could they appoint their successors. This arrangement might seem to be attended with the

* See the note, p. 360.

† Deut. xvii. 9.

disadvantage that at the death of a judge the supreme executive authority ceased; but on consideration it will appear that these civil functions devolved on the high-priest, or rather were inherent to his high office, and were called into operation in the absence of any person more especially appointed to exercise them. And, without this, the apparent disadvantage would be more than counterbalanced by its preventing a degenerate heir or successor from giving to idolatry the support of his influence. This authority was limited by the law alone; and in doubtful cases they were directed by the sacred Oracle.* They were not obliged in common cases to ask advice of the ordinary rulers; it was sufficient that they did not remonstrate against the measures of the judge. In important emergencies, however, they convoked a general assembly of the rulers, over which they presided and exerted a powerful influence. They could issue orders, but not enact laws; they could neither levy taxes nor appoint officers, except perhaps in the army. Their authority extended only over those tribes by whom they had been elected or acknowledged; for, as has been before remarked, several of the judges presided over separate tribes. There was no salary attached to their office, nor was there any income appropriated to them, unless it might be a larger share of the spoils, and those presents which were made to them as testimonials of respect.† They had no external marks of dignity, and maintained no retinue of courtiers, though some of them were very opulent. They were not only simple in their manners, moderate in their desires, and free from avarice and ambition, but noble and magnanimous men, who felt that whatever they did for their country was above all reward, and could not be recompensed; who desired merely to promote the public good, and chose rather to deserve well of their country than to be enriched by its wealth. This exalted patriotism, like everything else connected with politics in the theocratical state of the Hebrews, was partly of a religious character; and those regents always conducted themselves as the officers of God; in all their enterprises they relied upon him, and their only care was that their countrymen should acknowledge the authority of Jehovah, their invisible King.‡ Still they were not without faults, neither are they so represented by their historians; they relate, on the contrary, with the utmost frankness, the great sins of which some of them were guilty. They were not merely deliverers of the state from a foreign yoke, but destroyers of idolatry, foes of pagan vices, promoters of the knowledge of God, of religion, and of morality; restorers of theocracy in the minds of the Hebrews, and powerful instruments of Divine Providence in the promotion of the great design of preserving the Hebrew constitution, and by that means of rescuing the true religion from destruction.

By comparing the periods during which the Hebrews were oppressed by their enemies with those in which they were independent and governed by their own constitution, it is apparent that the nation in general experienced much more prosperity than adversity in the time of the judges: their dominion continued 472 years; but the whole period of foreign oppression amounts only to 131 years, scarcely a one-fourth part of that period. Even during these years of bondage, the whole nation was seldom under the yoke at the same time, but, for the most part, separate tribes only were held in servitude; nor were their oppressions always very severe; and all the calamities terminated in the advantage and glory of the people, as soon as they abolished idolatry and returned to their king, Jehovah. Neither was the nation in such a state of anarchy at this time as has generally been supposed. There were regular judicial tribunals at which justice could be obtained; and when there was no supreme regent, the public welfare was provided for by the high-priest and the ordinary rulers of the tribes.§ These rulers, it is true, were jealous of each other, and their jealousies not unfrequently broke out into civil war; but the union of the state was never entirely destroyed. They were not always provided with arms;‖ but yet, when united under their King, Jehovah, they gained splendid victories. They were not sufficiently careful to repress idolatry, but they never suffered it to become universally predominant. The sacred tabernacle was never entirely deserted and shut up, nor was it ever polluted by the rites of heathen superstition.

These times would certainly not be considered so turbulent as barbarous, much less would

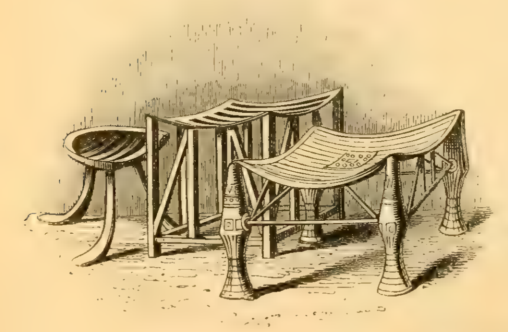
* Num. xxvii. 21. † Judges viii. 24. ‡ Judg. viii. 22, *et seq.*; comp. Heb. xi.
§ Ruth iv. 1—11; Judg. viii. 22, xi. 1—11; 1 Sam. iv. 1, vii. 1, 2. ‖ 2 Judg. v. 8; 1 Sam. xiii. 19.

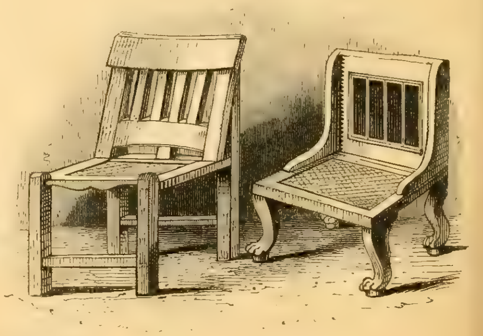
they be taken, contrary to the clearest evidence and to the analogy of all history, for a 'heroic age,'* if they were viewed without the prejudices of pre-conceived hypothesis. It must never be forgotten that the Book of Judges is by no means a complete history. It is, in a manner, a mere register of diseases, from which, however, we have no right to conclude that there were no healthy men, much less that there were no healthy seasons; when the book itself, for the most part, mentions only a few tribes in which the epidemic prevailed, and notices long periods during which it had entirely ceased. Whatever may be the result of more accurate investigation, it remains undeniable that the history of the Hebrews during this period, perfectly corresponds throughout to the sanctions of the law; and they were always prosperous when they complied with the conditions on which prosperity was promised to them; it remains undeniable that the government of God was clearly manifested, not only to the Hebrews, but to their heathen neighbours, that the fulfilling of the promises and threatenings of the law were so many sensible proofs of the universal dominion of the Divine King of the Hebrews; and, consequently, that all the various fortunes of that nation were so many means of preserving the knowledge of God on the earth. The Hebrews had no sufficient reason to desire a change in their constitution, since all that was necessary was that they should observe the conditions on which national prosperity had been promised to them.

* It is thus characterised by Heeren and other writers.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES.

(1) Seats, p. 415—It is remarkable that, although there is much mention of the act of sitting in the sacred books, there is very little to intimate the *manner* in which the Hebrews sat. However, from the frequent allusion to a *seat* in a *definite* sense, it is clear that they had the use of chairs or stools, and consequently that they sat less exclusively upon the ground, or on mats, carpets, and cushions placed on the ground, than do the modern orientals. This indeed is also shown by the mention of "sitting on the ground" as a *distinctive* act; for it would not be such if the people always sat on the ground, or if they did not often sit on raised seats. In the present case, Eli manifestly sat on a raised seat, and one also that had no back, for it was by falling *backward* that he broke his neck. Upon the whole, on this rather curious subject of domestic antiquities, it seems possible to collect that the practice of the Hebrews, instead of being limited to an identity with the existing usages of Asia, offered something of that variety which certainly existed in Egypt, and which combined the several usages which Europe and Asia now offer. The various postures of sitting on the ground now observed in the East—and which we will on another occasion separately notice—are all exhibited in the Egyptian sculptures and paintings, but appear chiefly to have been assumed by the common people, and in the presence of superiors. But they had also stools, chairs, fauteuils, couches, sofas, ottomans, footstools, in as great a variety as our own or any other modern European country can offer. But, although Solomon probably had





[Ancient Egyptian Seats.]

most of these, yet before his time, and among the people generally at *any* time, we do not suppose that the Hebrews refined this matter to the same extent as the Egyptians, and therefore we have derived our present illustrations from the ruder forms of the chairs and stools in use among that people. Of these not merely representations, but actual specimens, have been found, and are among the most curious articles in the Egyptian Room of the British Museum.* There are other examples in different collections. With respect to this class of subjects, Sir J. G. Wilkinson states that (speaking first of the *chairs*) they are of an inferior description to those represented in the sculptures, as compared with which they are deficient both in elegance of form and in the general style of their construction. The seat is only from eight to fourteen inches high. In some the seat is of wood, in others of interlaced strings or leathern thongs, in appearance, as well as in rank, not very unlike our own rush-bottomed chairs; and, among the Egyptians, they probably belonged to persons of inferior station, or to those rooms which were set apart for casual visitors.

Some of the chairs in use among the Egyptians were on the principle of our camp-stools, furnished with a cushion, or covered with the skin of a leopard or other animal, which could easily be removed when the chair was folded up, and it was not unusual to make other seats, and wooden head-stools or pillows, in the same manner. They were adorned in various ways, being bound with metal plates, or inlaid with ivory or foreign woods; and, even in some ordinary chairs, sycamore, or other native wood, was painted to imitate that of a more rare and valuable quality. The seat was frequently of leather, painted with flowers or fancy devices; and (as already remarked) the figure of a captive or a conquered foe was frequently represented at the side or among the ornaments of a chair. Sometimes the seat was formed of interlaced work of string, carefully and neatly arranged, which, like our Indian cane chairs, appears to have been particularly adapted for a hot climate; but over this even they occasionally placed a leathern cushion, painted in the manner already mentioned.

Most of the chairs and stools were about the ordinary height of those now used in Europe, the seat being nearly in a line with the bend of the knee; but others were very low; while chairs of state or thrones were so high as to require the addition of a foot-stool: but the higher class of seats must be reserved for a distinct notice. The skill of the Egyptian cabinet-makers had, even in the early era of Joseph, already done away with the necessity of uniting the legs with bars. Stools, however, and more rarely chairs, were occasionally made with these strengthening members, as is still the case in our own country. The stools used in the saloons were of the same style and elegance as the chairs, and often only differed from them in the absence of a back. Some of a more ordinary kind had solid sides, and were generally very low; and others with three legs, not unlike those used by the peasants of England, were used by persons of inferior rank.

Such were some of the humbler forms of the seats which the Egyptians offered to the imitation of the Hebrews. To what precise extent they were imitated, it is impossible to say; although that the Hebrews had to a certain extent seats framed on similar principles seems unquestionable. We shall soon have occasion to point out obvious imitations of the higher class of Egyptian seats by king Solomon.

(2) CARS DRAWN BY OXEN, p. 416.—That the Philistines thought of placing the ark on a *car*, to be drawn by oxen, shows that vehicles drawn by such animals were in use among them, at least in their sacred processions. There is nothing of the kind among the Egyptians. *Their* religious processions were walking processions, and by water,—that is to say, as all their towns were along the Nile, their religious progresses from one place to another were by that river, the short distances to and from which they walked, bearing their arks, their idols, and their implements of religious service. The Jews had no religious processions after they became a settled people—unless it were in the removals of the ark; which removals resulted from circumstances, for it was *intended* to be stationary. It was indeed not unlawful to take the ark to the wars; but the only instance in which this is recorded to have been done, was when it was taken by the Philistines. In the Wilderness the ark was carried on the shoulders of the Levites, as were the other more sacred utensils of the tabernacle; but the fabric itself, and its heavier furniture, were placed on cars or waggons *drawn by oxen.* The ark itself was never thus conveyed, except on the various stages of its return from the Philistines. For the Israelites, observing that those people had in this manner transported it safely, continued its removal in the same manner, until the consequences that ultimately

* They were all (ten in number) purchased from Mr. Salt's Collection, and cost, together, £170 16s. See D'Athanasi's 'Brief Account.' Catalogue, Nos. 657—664.

ensued, reminded them of the more proper method.

Among the Egyptians, horses appear to have been invariably employed for draught, whether in chariots of war or peace. But, although they had not themselves the custom, their sculptures coincide with the Scriptures in manifesting the use of oxen or kine for draught by other nations. An instance, from this source, has been given in this work, at p. 131, and another is supplied in the portion of text to which the present note is appended. Indeed, all the examples adduced in the former instance to illustrate the subject of *carts*, apply to the present, since all the carts there represented, from ancient and modern sources, are *drawn by oxen* equally with the more elegant class of vehicles represented in the present instance; and, taken together, they demonstrate the extensive use of oxen for draught in both the ancient and modern East. After Solomon, the Hebrews learned from the Egyptians and their nearer neighbours to have chariots of war drawn by horses; and kings and high military commanders appear to have had their private chariots also drawn by horses. To these and agricultural purposes, wheel-carriages seem to have been very much confined; but, as far as they were used, they appear, except in the cases specified, to have been drawn by oxen. The use of war-chariots has now nearly disappeared in the East, and with it the employment of horses for draught. Oxen are employed everywhere, from the Yellow Sea to the Mediterranean. And in our present engravings, the elegance of the vehicles, and the cost and finish of the equipments, shows that to ride in a car drawn by oxen is not, nor was, considered a mode of conveyance by any means so rude or ignoble as the first set of illustrations might have suggested.

DRUIDICAL REMAINS.

We are not aware that any remains such as those which last engaged our attention (p. 404) are to be found in Syria. Nor was this to be expected, seeing that the most ancient existing monuments of the kind do not appear to have been erected until considerably after their discontinuance in the country, and among the people, to whom our observations are chiefly intended to refer.

There is, however, among the remains in Phœnicia near Tartous and Aradus, some of which have already engaged our notice, one very ancient remain, which is of great and peculiar interest, from its intermediate character between the rude circle of large stones and the stately covered temple. There are in fact *two* of these very ancient works, very near each other; and it may be well to present both of them to the view of our readers, although the last described is that to which particular attention will be directed. The description we shall follow is that of Buckingham, which is much clearer and more intelligible than those which Maundrell and Pococke had before supplied.

A little to the north-east-by-east from the singular monuments which have been figured at p. 405 of this work, occurs a sort of open temple, the walls of enclosure being four feet thick and twelve high, hewn down out of the solid rock. There are small arched and other square doors of entrance; and on the inside are portions of wall, as if of former divisions; the sills for the bar of the arched door, as well as the sockets for its hinge, were visible, the original door being no doubt of metal or stone. Within are seen niches in the wall, as if for offerings; and without, in one or two places, are indications of mutilated statues. The whole appears to be about 100 feet square, and was perhaps, Buckingham conjectures, an open temple of one of the Phœnician divinities.

This is obviously, from its details, a more modern work than the other more decided monument of the same kind, which is less than a quarter of a mile distant from it to the north-east. This is a large open court, seventy-five paces, or about 150 feet, square; the sides hewn down out of the solid rock, but not forming isolated walls, as in the preceding, for here the cultivated ground is on a level with the tops of the sides all around, and the growing corn is seen high above it. It faces nearly the four cardinal points, being closed on three sides and open on the north. The side walls commence there by a slope, growing gradually higher till they reach the centre, and then continue in a straight line. They are here about twelve feet high, and in the centre of the southern wall at least fifteen. In each of the two innermost corners are isolated pillars, joined in angles, as if forming the angular pillars of a square colonnade. They are of a square form: and at the east end of the open front are two similar pillars, but no traces of others in correspondent directions. Oblong

square niches are seen at regular distances around the walls; and, as lamps would not be required in an open temple, they were probably for offerings.

In the centre of this court stands a pedestal of rock, eight paces square, and about ten feet high, excavated all round. On this is raised a sort of throne of masonry, open towards the north or front of the court. It appears about twelve feet high, and twelve wide in the clear of the inside. The inner front has a flat arched top, once stuccoed, as some of the stucco remains; the outer or overhanging part of the canopy is flat, and has four gutters in what may be called the soffit. The whole is crowned with a plain frieze in front, and a torus and cornice all around, perfectly Egyptian in its character, being a convex, and not such a concave moulded cornice as is seen in some other ancient monuments of this neighbourhood.

With respect to the whole of this remarkable work, Buckingham repeats the conjecture which all preceding authorities had sanctioned: "This was probably a temple, and the central edifice the throne of the idol, probably the sun, to which the Phœnicians were accustomed to pay adoration in open temples."*

The particular description of this central monument, corroborating the view of it given by Pococke, overturns the theory of King, who, deceived by the representation given in Maundrell,† and by an unusual inexactness in his descriptions, imagined that this central mass was a kind of Kist-vaen, and intended as an altar for human sacrifice. But it will appear from the engraving and description that it was nothing of the kind, and could not have been applied to such a purpose, but was simply the throne of the idol. If it be asked why such thrones are not elsewhere found, the answer is easy—and much useless discussion might be spared—by reflecting that, while the true God was worshipped, or even while the sun or other heavenly bodies were worshipped without images, only one altar was necessary in these open temples, however constructed. But when images were made symbolical of the sun or moon, to whose worship covered temples were not judged suitable,—or prior to the idea of such temples among certain nations,—there would be introduced a throne or pedestal, on which the idol might be seated and made conspicuous. Before this we should expect to find the altar; and very possibly there was an altar before the present throne, but, not being like that hewn in the solid rock, it may have been broken up in the course of ages, and removed, probably for building materials—the great cause of ruin to all destructible monuments in the East. It may also be pointed out how this nooked seat for an idol developes the first idea of ancient constructed temples, in which the edifice was merely the palace or sanctuary of the god, while the worshippers offered their service and sacrifices in the open enclosures wherein it stood. If also the remaining angular pillars indicate the existence of a colonnade along the walls of enclosure, in the ancient work which has been described, another analogy to the more ancient constructed temples is thereby suggested. There was such a colonnade or covered way in most ancient temples, of whatever order or style of architecture, that at Jerusalem included. And, indeed, the use of such a covered place for shelter in rainy or inclement weather must very soon have been obvious where there were no covered temples, or none to which the worshipper had access in the act of worship.

The question concerning the central mass in this remarkable ancient work suitably introduces us to the only other class of monuments, usually called Druidical, which remains for our consideration. These are,—

CROMLECHS and KIST-VAENS.

Cromlechs are too well known from pictorial representations and models to need particular description as to form and arrangement; for which reason, indeed, we have abstained from detailed descriptions of most of the British monuments which we have had occasion to notice. It may suffice to characterise them as large stones placed in the fashion of a table, but in an inclining position, upon others smaller, commonly three in number. The reason for this number of supporters is ingeniously conjectured by Borlase to be that it was found easier to place and fix securely an incumbent weight on three supporters than on four or more; because in the latter case all the four supporters must be exactly level at the top, and the under surface of the stone must also be planed and true, in order to bring the weight to bear exactly on every supporter; whereas three supporters obviate occasion for this nicety, the incumbent weight easily inclining itself and resting on any three props, although not exactly level at top; and accordingly we find the covering stone not horizontal, but more or less shelving,

* 'Travels among the Arab Tribes,' 514. See a representation of this work, at the end of the note.

† It ought to be known that the pictures in Maundrell's book are of no authority, and were not furnished by that exact writer, but were made up at home, from his descriptions, by others, at the instance of the booksellers.

the weight naturally subsiding to the point where the lowest supporter is found. Unequal supporters would also be more easily procured than those of the same height.*

The name Cromlech is interpreted to mean *an inclining stone*, from the British words *crwm*, bowed, and *llech*, a broad flat stone.†

Cromlechs are sometimes found isolated, but more usually in the centre of, or in some other way connected with, the Druidical circles. When found in this situation an upright stone is often standing near. For examples of these cromlechs we may refer to the first of the cuts at p. 342, which represents the two most considerable of this class of monuments remaining in our island. They are at Plas Newydd, in Anglesea. The upper stone of one is twelve feet seven inches long, twelve feet broad, and four feet thick, supported by five tall stones. The other, but barely separated from the first, is almost a square of five feet and a half, supported by four stones. These are not only the most magnificent cromlechs we possess, but the highest from the ground, for a middle-sized horse may easily pass under the largest.‡ It is seen, however, that they do not afford the usual characteristic of *three* supporters.

Concerning the use of these cromlechs there has been much controversy. Borlase and others contend that they were sepulchral monuments. It is true that human remains, ashes, bones, have been found under some of them; but, seeing that the human sacrifices by the Druids were notorious, these appearances might equally belong to them as altars or sepulchres. It is even possible that entire human bodies should be deposited there under peculiar circumstances, as a peculiarly honourable place of sepulture. In many no such remains have been found; and Sir R. C. Hoare records a remarkable example (in a field on the road from Newport to Fishguard) of five kist-vaens placed in a circle, with a cromlech in the centre and an outer circle of upright stones. Bones, charcoal, etc., were found under each of the kist-vaens, but none under the cromlech.§ This, under all the circumstances of allocation, is a remarkable testimony that cromlechs were not sepulchres in the primary intention, although under certain circumstances corpses may have been deposited beneath them. Besides, the forms of many of them are wholly unsuited to sepulchres. Some of them stand on the unbroken rock.

* 'Antiq. of Cornwall,' p. 124.

† Sir R. C. Hoare, 'Ancient Wiltshire.'

‡ Pennant's 'Wales,' ii. 246.

§ 'Ancient History of North Wiltshire,' 116.

The positive evidence that cromlechs were ALTARS is far stronger than even the negative testimonies that they were not sepulchres. Indeed, if they were not sepulchres, it almost follows necessarily that they were altars, as it is difficult to conceive any other purpose for which they could be designed. Besides, it is of some weight that all the traditions associated with them, and all the usages which in some remote quarters have remained connected with them, ascribe to them the character of altars. They are thus designated by Holinshed, who, after mentioning places "compassed about with great stones, round like a ring," adds, "but towards the south was one mightie stone, farre greater than all the rest, pitched up in manner of an altar, whereon their priests might offer sacrifices in honour of their gods." In the north, where the ideas connected with the several old monuments of stone have been longer preserved than in this country, the cromlechs which they have* are still believed to have been altars. In that very instructive book, 'Mallet's Northern Antiquities,'† we find the following passage,—"Although we want the greater part of the monuments which might instruct us in that (primitive) stage of their religion, the traces of it are not yet entirely destroyed. We find at this day, here and there, in Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, in the middle of a plain, or upon some little hill, altars, around which they assembled to offer sacrifices and to assist at other religious ceremonies. The greater part of these altars are raised upon a little hill, either natural or artificial. Three long pieces of rock, set upright, serve as a basis for a great flat stone, which forms the table of the altar. There is commonly a cavity under the altar, which might be intended to receive the blood of the victims; and they never fail to find stones suitable for striking fire scattered round it, for no other fire but such as was struck forth with a flint was suitable for so holy a purpose. Sometimes these rural altars were constructed in a more magnificent manner; a double range of enormous stones surround the altar and the little hill on which it is erected. In Zealand we see one of this kind.‡ Men would even

* These are, however, different from ours, approaching nearer to kist-vaens, although we have some of the same class to which theirs belong.

† 'Northern Antiquities, or a Description of the Manners, Customs, Religion, and Laws of the Ancient Danes, including those of our own Saxon ancestors. With a translation of the Edda, or System of Runic Mythology, and other Pieces, from the Icelandic Tongue. Translated from 'L'Introduction à l'Histoire de Dannemarc, &c., par Mons. Mallet,' with additional Notes by the English Translator (Bishop Percy), and Goranson's Latin version of the Edda.' London, 1770.

‡ Vide Olai Wormii Monum. Danicorum.

now be afraid to undertake such a work, notwithstanding the assistance of all the mechanic powers, which in those times they wanted. What redoubles the astonishment is, that stones of that size are rarely to be seen throughout the island, and that they must have been brought from a great distance. What labour and perseverance must then have been bestowed upon these vast rude monuments, which are unhappily more durable than those of the fine arts. But men in all ages have been persuaded that they could not pay greater honour to the Deity than by making for him (if I may so express it) a kind of strong bulwarks, in executing prodigies of labour, in consecrating to him immense riches.......At Ephesus they displayed their devotion by laying out all the treasures of Greece and 'Asia.' The Goths, whose bodily strength was all their riches, showed their zeal by rolling enormous rocks to the summits of hills."

Olaus Wormius also regards all the various northern cromlechs as altars of different forms.* In the north of Europe these are still called *blod*, *i. e.* blood-stones, indicating their ancient use.

Even subsisting usages support this appropriation. Mr. Downes,† speaking of an immense cromlech at Albersdorf, in the confines of Holstein, says that a well-informed man acquainted him "that the cromlech was an altar for sacrifice; and that there was another in the village of Bedel, near the river Elbe, *surrounded with oaks*, in a garden; and that it was customary to offer sacrifices upon these cromlechs before a person began ploughing and before he was married; that no one entered this grove without making a present; and that no one swept the cave [under the cromlech] without finding money." The traveller found it confirmed by traditions on the spot, that marriages were there celebrated in the open air, and sacrifices made before persons began ploughing.

We may now turn our attention to the KIST-VAEN, concerning which the diversity of opinion has been as great as concerning the cromlech. It consists of two or three more sides, or uprights, and a back stone occasionally, and over the whole is placed a top or covering-stone. In general a cell is thus formed, closed on three sides and covered at top, but open now in front, although possibly closed when in actual use by some less durable material than the stone which forms the substance of the structure. The name *Kist-vaen* (pl. *Kistieu-vaen*) is Welsh, and means literally a *stone chest*. Kist-vaens are commonly found in the middle of stone circles, near the cromlech, and sometimes without any cromlech near. They are also found isolated like the cromlechs, although generally other Druidical monuments seem in their neighbourhood. They are sometimes arranged in circles, with or without a cromlech in the centre; but we are aware of no instance in which the reverse occurs, namely, in which a kist-vaen stands within a circle of cromlechs. But there are examples in which kist-vaens combine with cromlechs to form a circle; and there are others in which a circle is formed by kist-vaens with intervening upright stones. A remarkable example of this last description is exhibited in the Druidical circle in Jersey, a representation of which has been given in p. 342.

There is certainly very considerable difficulty in determining the use of these monuments. Sir R. C. Hoare, from the instance, which has already been mentioned, of his finding a circle of five kist-vaens, under all of which there were sepulchral remains, while there were none under the central cromlech, is satisfied that they were intended for sepulchres. But, although the instance may be taken among others as proving that cromlechs were not sepulchres, but altars, it is by no means equally conclusive as to the kist-vaens being sepulchres, and this for nearly the same reasons as those by which the same purpose of cromlechs is rendered improbable. To which the other fact may be added, that under some of these monuments, that is, within the cell, springs of water rise, showing that such places could never have been sepulchres. That human remains and ashes are found around, or even within, some of them, might as well prove them to be altars as sepulchres; and even were remains, evidently inhumed with honour, there found, it would prove nothing as to their original intention. Honourable persons might desire to be buried in or near them, even as, among ourselves, persons of distinction are still buried in churches, and possibly for nearly the same reasons. It may have been a peculiar privilege of those initiated in the Druidic mysteries to be buried in them.

Besides, as Davies* sensibly remarks, "the

* His words are—" Ararum structura apud nos varia est. Maxima ex parte congesta ex terrâ constant tumulo, in cujus summitate tria ingentia saxa, quartum, illudque majus, latius ac planius sustinent, fulciunt ac sustenant, ut instar mensæ tribus fulcris innixæ emineat." etc. p. 7. The cut in page 433 represents a regular cromlech on the top of a hill corresponding to the descriptions of Olaus Magnus and Mallet.

† Letters from Mecklenburgh and Holstein, pp. 102, 203, cited by Fosbroke, p. 508.

* 'Mythology of the Druids.'

date of these erections being very remote, and their use entirely forgotten, it is not improbable that, being misled by certain resemblances which present themselves to superficial observation, we confound two or three different kinds of monuments,* which were really distinct, and which were erected for different purposes; and that, in consequence of this mistake, when we have discovered the use of one cromlech, we make erroneous conclusions respecting others."

Most of the writers who suppose the cromlechs to be sepulchres regard the kist-vaens as altars; while those who regard the former as altars generally deem the latter to be sepulchres. There are many, however, who deny the sepulchral use of either, and contend that the cromlech and kist-vaen are merely different kinds of altars, greater and lesser,—the one perhaps for sacrifice, the other for oblations. We were for a time inclined to this opinion: but on careful deliberation, and considering that the first tabernacles and constructed temples are to be taken as commentaries on the stone monuments of more ancient date, we felt more disposed to find an analogy between the kist-vaen, or stone chest, and the *ark*, or sacred chest, which we find as the most holy object in the tabernacle and temple of the Hebrews, as well as in the Egyptian and some other heathen temples. In this case it would be the *adytum*, the most holy point, the Bethel, *house* of God, pre-eminently, and the true centre to which the local worship tended. Regarding the kist-vaen, then, as being to these open stone temples what the ark was in constructed temples, or, in other words, as a stone ark, it becomes a question what was the original idea therein, and which occasioned so peculiar a form as that of *a chest* to be given to it. Bryant, Davies, and, more lately and powerfully, the Rev. G. S. Faber, in his great work, 'On the Origin of Pagan Idolatry,' would contend that this form, so prevalent in all the ancient religions of the world, commemorated the ark of Noah, which formed, as it were, the womb or cradle of the postdiluvian races of mankind, and which, as such, was exceedingly liable to become an object of symbolization, and of type and figure. We have already expressed our belief that portable arks existed, that is, had been, among at least the Egyptians, exchanged for those of stone, before the establishment of the Hebrew ritual. And if so, it may be conceived that, according to the principles on which we have shown that ritual to have been founded,† the ark was adopted into that ritual, and made an object most peculiarly sacred to Jehovah, in order by this appropriation to preclude the Israelites from any other application of the ideas and usages which had already become connected with this mystical object.

Thus, from the writings of the ancient bards, who preserved among themselves the Druidical superstitions long after they had decayed or become extinct among the mass of the people, it appears that there was a stone ark or chest *in* which those to be initiated in the mysteries of Druidism underwent a confinement and severe probationary penance; that this confinement was designed to shadow out a confinement in a ship floating upon the waters.* At this time also, by a late but easy transition of idea, this same ark was regarded as the *hall* or *womb* of Ceridwen, the British Ceres, in emerging from which the novice was considered as having become a perfect man, born again,—born to a new and higher state of being, after having been considered mystically dead, and buried therein. In one sense the stone ark was mystically a sepulchre, in which the novice was inhumed, and from which he rose again to a new and higher life; and also a womb in which he lay to germinate and grow into a perfect being. Nor will these ideas, as connected with what in its original intention may be supposed to have been the ark of Noah, seem strange to the reader of the Scriptures who remembers such passages as those in which the Christian mystery of baptism is compared to being buried, and rising again to a more pure existence,† or in which the ark of Noah is distinctly referred to as a symbol of baptismal purification.‡

These ideas are figured out in obscure allegories in the Bardic writings to which we have referred. One of the most striking passages adduced by Davies is that in which Taliesin describes his probation, and which we adduce as a specimen of those "dark sentences:"—

"I was first modelled in the form of a pure man in the hall of Ceridwen, who subjected me to penance. Though small within my ark, and modest in my deportment, I was great. A sanctuary carried me above the surface of the earth. While I was enclosed within its ribs, the sweet Awen rendered me complete; and

* This he seems to do himself by regarding the cromlech and kist-vaen as essentially the same monument.

† See the chapter on the Law, *passim*.

* Hence, perhaps, it is that some of them have been placed over springs of water.

† "We are buried with him (Christ) by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Rom. vi. 5.—"Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him." Col. ii. 12.

‡ 1 Peter, iii. 20, 21.

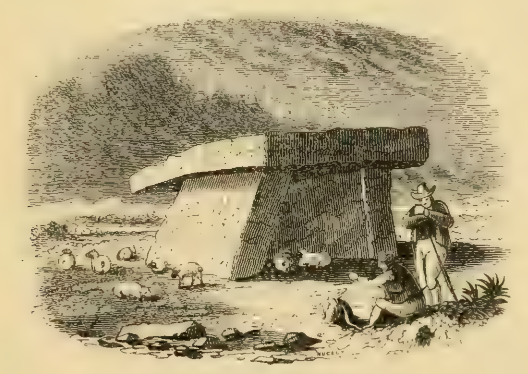
my law, without audible tongue, was imparted to me by the old giantess darkly smiling in her wrath: but her claim was not regretted when she set sail. I fled, in the form of a fair grain of pure wheat; upon the edge of a covering-cloth, she caught me in her fangs. In appearance she was large as a proud mare,* which she also resembled. There was she swelling out like a ship upon the waters. Into a dark receptacle she cast me. She carried me back into the sea of Dylan. It was an auspicious omen to me when she happily suffocated me. God, the Lord, freely set me at large."†

There are other passages, more or less clear, from Taliesin and other writers, from which may be collected the results which we have described. The subject is altogether, in its various bearings, one of great interest: but, as we are apprehensive it may seem to us more so than to the generality of our readers, we will not pursue it further. It may suffice to intimate the probability that the stone ark [for in some passages it is stated to be of stone], the place of close confinement, the gloomy recess, in which the process of initiation was performed, was no other than the kist-vaen, which may be concluded to have been closed in front on such occasions, and for such purposes. There is certainly nothing else remaining among the Druidical monuments that corresponds to these intimations.

How far the cromlechs and kist-vaens contribute to the illustration of the *altars* of unhewn stone and *the high places* mentioned in Scripture is a point which we may perhaps take another opportunity to consider. Meanwhile, it may be noticed that monuments of this and other classes still exist in Palestine, especially in the country beyond Jordan; although scarcely any of them have been described. Mr. Farren has probably more information on the subject than any other person. In his letter to Lord Lindsay, he says, "On the eastern side of the hills of Jordan, and over the plains of Manasseh and Gad, monuments like those of the Druid age of England still illustrate the rural superstitions of the dim ages, which, denounced in holy writ, were probably imparted to us from them." And Lord Lindsay himself, in one of his 'Letters,' remarks, "Mr. Farren tells me that there are some Phœnician (?) monuments near Souf—one of which he showed me a drawing of—as decidedly Druidical as Stonehenge."*

Some of the monuments thus referred to are doubtless the same which attracted the attention of Captains Irby and Mangles near the river Jordan, on approaching that river by a new route from Souf to Bysan (*Bethshan*). That they call them "tombs," we suppose is on the theory that kist-vaens were sepulchres. They state:—

"On the banks of the Jordan, at the foot of the mountain† we observed some very singular, interesting, and certainly very ancient tombs (?), composed of great rough stones, resembling what is called 'Kit's Cotty House' in Kent. They are built of two long side stones, with one



[Kit's Cotty House.]

at each end, and a small door in front, mostly facing the north: this door was of stone. All were of rough stones, apparently not hewn, but found in flat fragments, many of which are seen about the spot in huge flakes. Over the whole was laid an immense flat piece, projecting both at the sides and ends. What rendered these tombs the more remarkable *was*, that the interior was not long enough for a body,‡ being

* "The *Ceres Hippa* of the Greeks, who similarly received Bacchus into her womb."—Faber.

† Davies, 255, 256.

* Lord Lindsay's 'Letters,' pp. 126, 239.

† One of the Gilead mountains by which they descended to the river.

‡ A good proof that they were *not* tombs.

only five feet. This is occasioned by both the front and back stones being considerably within the ends of the side ones. There are about twenty-seven of these tombs, very irregularly situated." *

Another monument, frequently associated with cromlechs in the centre of Druidical circles, is a large block, or upright stone, which Toland supposes was the pedestal of the idol. It is possible that it might have been such in its ultimate use, and the throne upon the rocky mass, in the open temple near Tartous, gives some support to this conjecture; but we have already expressed the conviction that all these stone monuments were in use long anterior to idols. Cooke conjectures that such upright stones formed the *kebla*, marking the point to which all attention was to be turned in worship. In this case they were doubtless the *stones of observation*, that is, *observable stones*, or *stones to be looked to*, which, among others, the Israelites were forbidden to set up.† Being thus looked to as the point of attention in the most solemn act of worship, they came gradually to be regarded as in themselves the object of worship, and hence the interdiction. With this knowledge, the Syriac and Onkelos render the original in this text by "*stones of adoration*." From the universal use of a kebla, which even among Mohammedans is still a stone, in the worship of the East, we have no doubt that a kebla was among the stony apparatus of Druidical worship; but it may seem doubtful whether this or the kist-vaen were the true kebla of local worship. The *form* certainly would seem rather in favour of this stone, especially when the observations which have already been made respecting the veneration paid to such stones are brought to bear upon those which are thus situated.

But, whatever may have been the *religious* purpose of these stones, their *civil* use may be collected without much difficulty.

The view taken by Mr. King would lead one to conclude that this stone was the station of the chief person on civil occasions, and was especially used for inaugurations. According to his theory, indeed, the circles in which such pillars only are found, *without altars*, were solely appropriated to civil uses; but, according to the view which we have been induced to take, as explained in a former note (p. 404), we should rather suppose that, in those cases where the stone alone appears, it owes its longer preservation than the altar which (we assume) once existed near it, to the fact that the judicial and civil use of these circles was preserved long after the religious use was discontinued. That the stones in question were employed for the purpose which Mr. King alleges, we are very willing to believe, for such an appropriation is more in agreement with Scripture, and supplies a larger amount of Scriptural illustration, than any other which could be proposed.

This ingenious antiquarian thinks that the most complete stone of this kind seems to be that described by Borlase, at Boscawen in Cornwall. In some cases the stones are such as those on which the chief person, or a prince to be inaugurated, might be supposed to sit or stand; while others are such as, by their form, could only mark the station at or near which he was to stand or sit. Of both customs,—standing or sitting upon a stone, and sitting or standing by a pillar, ample historical evidence may be produced, and may indeed be traced down to recent times, if not to the present day. Thus, in the Western Islands, where, from their sequestered situation, old customs have longer been preserved than in our island, remains of the crowning or inauguration stone are still found. In the isle of Isla there was fixed a large stone seven feet square, in which was a cavity or deep impression to receive the feet. Standing on this stone, with his feet in the cavity, Macdonald stood when he was crowned king of the Isles, and, thus standing, swore to continue all his vassals in the possession of their lands, and to render exact justice to all his subjects. Having thus sworn, the sword of his father was put into his hands, and the Bishop of Argyle, assisted by seven priests, anointed him king in the presence of all the heads of the clans in the isles and in the continent [as they call the larger isle of Great Britain]; and at the same time an orator rehearsed a catalogue of his ancestors. Here also sat the high court of judicature, consisting of fourteen members, to which there was an appeal from all the courts of the isles; and the eleventh share of the sum in debate was the due of the principal judge.* We have in all this a very remarkable instance of the preservation of ancient customs, which seem to have been derived from times coeval with the erection of the circle of stones.

Spenser affirms that among the Irish of his time, immediately after the death of any of their chiefs or captains, it was their custom to assemble in a well-known and appointed place to choose another, who was not generally the eldest son, but the next of blood who was eldest and worthiest. Him they placed upon

* Travels, 325.

† Lev. xxvi. 1.

* Martin's 'Western Islands,' p. 9.

a stone, which commonly stood upon a hill. Some of the stones used for this purpose bore the impress of a foot, said to be the measure of that of their first chief or captain. Standing thus, the elected chief took an oath to maintain the old laws and customs of the country. A wand was then presented to him by a proper officer, bearing which in his hand, he descended from the stone, and turned himself around thrice forward and thrice backward.*

We are greatly pleased with this statement, as it conveys the only satisfactory account we have met with of the stones, found in different parts of the world, bearing the impress of feet. These are nowhere more common than in Palestine and in other countries of south-western Asia; and, the original use being forgotten, the impress which such stones bear have been ascribed by the superstitions of the people to their several saints and holy persons —Adam, Elias, Mohammed, and others. Some of these impressed stones, objects of high veneration to the people, have been noticed in the descriptive portion of the present work.

Of this use of erected stones for purposes of inauguration there are many instances in Scripture. But, as they are duly noticed in the history, it will suffice to indicate the passages in which these instances are offered.†

Indeed a marked instance of this use of a stone in a temple is continued very conspicuously to this very day in the case of the stone under the chair in which our sovereigns are crowned. This is supposed to be the same stone on which the supreme kings of Ireland were to be inaugurated in the times of heathenism on the hill of Tarah. It was a persuasion of the ancient Irish that one of their blood should reign in whatever country this stone remained. Hence it was sent to confirm the Irish colony in the north of Britain, where it always continued to form the coronation chair of the Scottish kings, until it was removed by our Edward I. from Scone, and placed under the coronation chair in Westminster Abbey, where it has ever since remained, being, as Toland observes, "the ancientest respected monument in the world; for, although some others may be more ancient as to duration, yet thus superstitiously regarded they are not."*

* 'View of the State of Ireland.'

† Judges ix. 6; 1 Sam. xi. 14, 15; 1 Sam. xiii. 4, 22; 1 Kings i. 9; 2 Kings xi. 14, 17; 2 Kings xxiii. 3.

* Although we have in most instances cited the authorities we have had occasion to produce, a collected view of them may not be useless:—

Stukeley, Abury and Stonehenge; Rowland, Mona Antiqua Restaurata; Borlase, Antiquities of Cornwall; King, Munimenta Antiqua; Hoare, Ancient History of Wiltshire; Olaus Magnus, Epitome Hist. de Gent. Septentrionalibus, 1588; Olaus Wormius, Danicorum Monumenta, 1643; Toland, History of the Celtic Religion and Learning; Pelloutier, Histoire des Celtes; Mallet, Northern Antiquities, translated by Bishop Percy; Davies, Mythology of the Druids; Cooke, Inquiry into the Patriarchal and Druidical Religions, Temples, &c.; Asplin, Alkibla; Faber, Origin of Pagan Idolatry; Ancient Universal History, b. iv. ch. 25, sect. 2 (vol. xviii.); Fosbroke, Encyclopædia of Antiquities; Archæologia, *passim;* Brayley, Graphic Illustrator; Maundrell, Journey from Aleppo to Damascus; Pococke, Description of the East; Ouseley, Travels in the East; Irby and Mangles, Travels; Buckingham, Travels among the Arab Tribes; Lord Lindsay, Letters on the Holy Land. Some curious intimations on the general subject of such monuments as have engaged our attention may also be gathered from Major Moor's 'Oriental Fragments.' He calls them '*Hindruidic,*' and in all cases contends for their Oriental origin.



[Open Temple in Phœnicia.]

CHRONOLOGICAL NOTES TO BOOK III.

[From Hales.]

	Years.	Before Christ.
1. Joshua and the Elders.	26	1608
First Division of Lands	..	1602
Second Division of Lands	..	1596
Anarchy or Interregnum	10	1582
Servitude to the Mesopotamians	8	1572
2. Othniel	40	1564
Servitude to the Moabites	18	1524
3. Ehud and Shamgar	80	1506
Servitude to the Canaanites	20	1426
4. Deborah and Barak	40	1406
Servitude to the Midianites	7	1366
5. Gideon	40	1359
6. Abimelech	3	1319
7. Tola	23	1316
8. Jair	22	1293
Servitude to the Ammonites.	18	1271
9. Jephthah	6	1253
10. Ibzan	7	1247
11. Elon	10	1240
12. Abdon.	8	1230
Servitude to the Philistines	40 { 20	1222
13. Samson	20	1202
14. Eli }	40 { 30	1182
Samuel called as a Prophet }	10	1152
Servitude to the Philistines	20	1142
15. Samuel	12	1122
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BOOK IV.

THE KINGDOM.

CHAPTER I.

SAUL.



[Warrior and Armour Bearer—Modern Egypt.]

It is very important to notice that the election of Saul was by no means unconditional, or to such unrestricted regal power as is usually exercised in the East. In fact the Hebrew monarchy, as now established, is, we believe, the only example which the history of the East can offer of a limited constitutional government. Such of these limitations as *necessarily* resulted from the peculiar position of the king, as the regent or vicegerent of a spiritual and

Almighty King, have already been pointed out. But besides these, there were other conditions not so necessarily resulting from this position, but judged essential to the welfare of the state and to the objects of its institution. And these were specially and formally guaranteed; and, together with the others, unquestionably formed what, in the language of modern politics, would be called "the constitution" of the Hebrew monarchy. We are told that after the people had accepted, with acclamations, the King on whom the lot had fallen, Samuel "told the people the manner of the kingdom, *and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before Jehovah.*" It was thus deposited in the keeping of the priests, that it might be preserved safely, and that it might be at all times seen whether the king observed the conditions on which the crown had been offered to him and accepted by him. Here, then, we have not only a constitution, but a written charter. We do not indeed know what powers it conferred upon the king, or what restraints it imposed upon his will; we only know that his authority was far less absolute than that of other ancient Oriental kings. It may, indeed, without difficulty be concluded, that they were conformable to those principles of subserviency to the theocracy, which have already been explained, as well as to those foundations for a limited monarchy which had long before been laid by Moses, who was enabled to foresee and provide for the exigency which now occurred.

1. It was thus, by the fundamental law of the commonwealth, forbidden that the king should introduce any new mode of religious worship; neither could he, like the kings of other nations, perform the functions of a priest, unless entitled to do so, independently of his regal office, as one of the family of Aaron, which was the case with the Asmonean princes. On the contrary, he was bound to rule as the representative and vassal of Jehovah; to promote the institutions of religion as a matter of obedience to Him; to suppress idolatry as rebellion against him; to attend to the declarations of the prophets as his ambassadors, and faithfully to observe the laws of Moses.* On this account it was required that the king should make a transcript of the law from the copy of the priests, and "rend therein all the days of his life, that he might learn to fear Jehovah his God, to keep all the words of the law, that his heart might not be lifted up above his brethren," that is, that he should be no arbitrary despot, making his own will or pleasure the rule of his conduct.†

2. When we find subjoined to this injunction, as the consequence of obedience to it, "to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children, in the midst of Israel," we infer that it was intended that the kingdom should be hereditary, but yet so that it might be transferred from one family to another by the will of Jehovah and the wishes of the people. In this manner it actually did pass from the line of Saul to that of David, and in the kingdom of Israel the change was very frequent.

3. The king was forbidden to imitate the pernicious luxury of other Oriental monarchs. He was not allowed to hoard up large treasures, lest the circulation of money should be obstructed, industry discouraged, or his subjects impoverished; neither was he permitted to keep a numerous harem, lest (not to mention other disadvantages) he should be alienated from God by his women, many of whom would probably be foreigners.

4. As cavalry could be of little use in the mountainous regions of Palestine, and as the king of the Hebrews was never to become a conqueror of foreign lands, or a universal monarch, he was forbidden to maintain large bodies of cavalry. So much reliance was also placed in those times upon horses, and so much pride taken in them, that the possession of a body of cavalry was calculated to interfere with that simple reliance upon the power of Jehovah, which the Hebrews were still required to exercise in such military undertakings as might obtain his sanction; and none unsanctioned by Him were lawful.

The election of Saul, though generally approved, did not meet with universal acceptance. In one point of view, the choice of a person belonging to a neutral and powerless tribe was calculated to obviate the rivalries of the two great tribes of Ephraim and Judah, who probably both thought that they had the better right to the distinction, but neither of whom were likely to agree that the other should have had it. But, on the other hand, Saul himself was not

* 1 Sam. xv. 1—20. † Deut. xvii. 14—20.

likely to derive the more respect from this neutral and politically insignificant position which prevented the mutual jealousies of these great rivals. But seeing that the tribe of Benjamin was, from its geographical position, closely connected with, and in some degree dependent on that of Judah, it is more probable that the dissentients, "the children of Belial," who despised Saul, and said, "How shall this man save us?" were of the haughty and turbulent tribe of Ephraim. Samuel left it to the people themselves to settle the money price they were to pay for their new luxury; and, although he had foreshown the exactions which the regal state would in the end render necessary, it was not his object to give his sanction to that which he had announced as a contingent evil. Besides, the external organisation of the new government was left to be developed by circumstances, the prophet having only cared to secure the principles. Saul was left to grow into his position and its privileges, while Samuel continued to administer the civil government: for it is to be borne in mind that Samuel continued to judge Israel all the days of his life, which did not terminate until thirty-eight years after the election of Saul, who himself outlived the prophet but two years. The position of Saul was, therefore, for the greater part of his reign, chiefly that of a military leader, while Samuel continued to discharge the civil part of the regal office, to which it was probably obvious that Saul was not competent. The *kingdom*, properly speaking, was not established, not developed under Saul, but only *begun* with him. And this it is necessary to understand, if we would clearly apprehend the *growth* of that monarchical principle which was only *planted* with Saul.

After his election at Gilgal, the king returned to his own home at Gibeah, where such "presents" were brought him by the people as Oriental kings usually receive, and which form no inconsiderable portion of their ordinary revenue. As the product of these offerings was probably more than adequate to the present wants and expectations of the king, who as yet assumed no regal state, the question as to the permanent support of the kingly government was not yet pressed upon the attention of either the people or the king. The discontented parties, however, "brought him no presents." Saul took no notice of their insults, but wisely "held his peace."

Very soon after Saul's election, the Ammonites, under their king Nahash, marched into the old disputed territory beyond Jordan, and laid siege to the important city of Jabesh Gilead. The inhabitants, avowing their impotence, offered to submit to the condition of paying tribute to the Ammonites; but the insulting and barbarous king refused to receive their submission on any other terms than that the right eye of every one of them should be extinguished, that they might remain as so many living monuments of his victory. Here again was a barbarity of which the Israelites were never guilty, even in thought. The people of Jabesh Gilead were so distressed that they dared not absolutely refuse even these merciless conditions, but besought a grace of seven days for deliberation. This they did with the hope that the tribes on the other side the river might, in the interval, be roused by the news to appear for their deliverance. Nor was their hope in vain. Saul no sooner received the intelligence than he at once and decidedly stood up in his position of a hero and a king, claiming the obedience of the people, whom he summoned to follow him to the deliverance of Jabesh Gilead. This call was readily obeyed; for it ran in the names of Saul *and Samuel*, and was conveyed in that imperative and compulsory form, which it was not, under any circumstances, judged safe to disobey.* For he hewed a yoke of oxen in pieces, and sent the pieces by the hands of swift messengers to all Israel, calling them, by all the penalties of that well-known and dreaded sign, to follow him. All Israel obeyed with one consent. All the men, of age to bear arms, quitted their several labours, and hastened from all parts to the plain of Bezek, where Saul numbering his army, found it to consist of 330,000 men, of whom 30,000 were of Judah, which seems rather an inadequate proportion for so large a tribe. It being already the sixth day, Saul sent to apprise the citizens of Jabesh Gilead of the help which was preparing for them, and which they might expect to receive on the morrow, being the very day they were to surrender their eyes to the Ammonites.

* See before, p. 369.

Accordingly, in the morning, the king, having marched all night, appeared before Jabesh, at the head of his army, invested the camp of the Ammonites, and falling upon them on three different sides, overthrew them with a great slaughter. So complete was the rout, that those who escaped were so broken and dispersed that no two could be found together.

Saul in this action displayed a large measure of those heroic qualities which the ancient nations most desired their monarchs to possess. Considering all the circumstances, the promptitude and energy of his decision, the speed with which he collected an immense army and brought it into action, and the skill and good military conduct of the whole transaction, there are probably few operations of the Hebrew history which more recommends themselves to the respect and admiration of a modern soldier. Its effect was not lost upon the people, who joyfully recognised in their king the qualities which have generally been held most worthy of rule; and so much was their enthusiasm excited, that they began to talk of putting to death the small minority who had refused to recognise his sovereignty. But Samuel interposed to prevent an act unbecoming a day in which "God had wrought salvation in Israel." So harsh a proceeding would also have been rather likely to provoke than allay the disaffection of the leading tribes.

Samuel then invited the army, which comprehended in fact the effective body of the Hebrew people, to proceed to Gilgal, there solemnly to confirm the kingdom to Saul, seeing that now his claims were undisputed by any portion of the people. This was done with great solemnity, and with abundant sacrifices of peace and joy.

But lest this solemnity, which was obviously designed to remind the people of their continued dependence on Jehovah, should be construed into an approbation and sanction of all their proceedings, the prophet took this public occasion of reminding them that their proceeding had been most unpleasing to their Divine King; although, if they maintained their fidelity to him and to the principles of the theocracy, some of the evil consequences might be averted. He also neglected not the opportunity of justifying his own conduct and the purity of his administration. He challenged assembled Israel to produce one instance of oppression, fraud, or corruption on his part, while he had been their sole judge; and in that vast multitude not one voice was raised to impugn his integrity and uprightness. He then proceeded to remind them of their past transgressions, in forgetting or turning astray from their God, with the punishments which had invariably followed, and the deliverances which their repentance had procured; showing them, by these instances, the sufficiency of their Divine Sovereign to rule them, and to save them from their enemies, without the intervention of an earthly king, whom they had persisted in demanding. And he assured them that, under their regal government, public sins would not come to be visited with public calamities. To add the greater weight to his words, and to evince the Divine displeasure, the commissioned prophet called down thunder and rain from heaven, then at the usual season of wheat harvest, when the air is usually, in that country, serene and cloudless. On this the people were greatly alarmed at the possible consequences of the displeasure they had provoked, and besought Samuel to intercede for them. The prophet kindly encouraged them to hope that if they continued to trust faithfully in God, all would yet be well; and he assured them of continued intercession on their behalf, and of his services as a civil judge or teacher,—for that the omission would be a sin on his own part.

Saul, now fully established as king, dismissed his numerous army; but he retained 3000 of their number, 2000 of which he stationed at Michmash and Bethel, under his own immediate orders, while the other thousand were at Gibeah of Benjamin, under his eldest son Jonathan. Josephus says that these formed the body-guard of himself and his son. If so, he began very soon to act "like the kings of the nations," and to fulfil one part of the predictions of Samuel as to the course which the kingdom was likely to take. Even supposing (as we rather do) that he retained this force to be in readiness for the smaller military operations which he had in view, it is evident that he had already taken the idea of a standing army, the nucleus of which this body of 3000 men may be deemed to have formed. At all events, it may seem as an early indication of Saul's subsequently besetting public sin, of forgetting

his properly vice-regal character, and his subordination to the Divine King. It was assuredly a new thing in Israel, and does savour somewhat of a distrust of God's providence, by which the peculiar people had hitherto been protected and delivered in every time of need; as well as of an affectation of that independent authority which "the kings of the nations" took to themselves. However, as the character of Saul seems to be held generally in more disesteem than the writers of his history intended, we shall not impute blame to him where the Scripture does not; but are ready to allow that, under all the circumstances, the measure was prudent and proper; for it appears that an enemy was then actually present in the country, whose expulsion the king had then in view. There were garrisons of the Philistines in the land. How this came to pass is not very clear. It would seem, however, that in resigning their conquests after their last defeat, they had retained some hill fortresses, from which they knew the Hebrews would find it difficult to dislodge them; and that when they recovered from the blow which was then inflicted upon their power, they contrived, by the help of this hold which they had in the country, to bring the southern tribes (at least those of Judah and Benjamin) under a sort of subjection. Thus when Saul was returning home after having been privately anointed by Samuel at Ramah, and met the sons of the prophets at Gibeah, we learn that at that place was "a garrison of the Philistines." And now we further learn that the Hebrews had in fact been disarmed by that people. According to that jealous policy of which other examples will ultimately be offered, they had even removed all the smiths of Israel, lest they should make weapons of war; in consequence of which the Hebrews were obliged to resort to the Philistines whenever their agricultural implements needed any other sharpening than that which a grindstone could give; and as this was an unpleasant alternative, even these



[Grindstone.]

important instruments had been suffered to become blunt at the time to which we are now come; and so strict had been the deprivation of arms that, in the military operations which soon after followed, no one of the Israelites, save Saul and his eldest son, was possessed of a spear or sword.

This was the state of southern Palestine, where Jonathan, acting doubtless by the orders of his father, attacked and overcame with his thousand men the Philistine garrison in Gibeah.

Encouraged by this success, Saul caused open war to be proclaimed, by sound of trumpet, against the Philistines, and to assert his authority over the tribes beyond Jordan, who were but too apt to regard their interests as separate from those of the other tribes, and who might think themselves exempt from taking part in a war against a people whose oppressions had not extended to themselves,—Saul directed the proclamation to be made not only " throughout all the land," but in a special manner it included " those beyond Jordan." They did not disobey ; but came with other Israelites, from all quarters, to the standard of the king at Gilgal. The people generally, though destitute of proper military weapons, were much inspirited by the success of Jonathan, and by their confidence in the now tried valour and military conduct of the king.

Meanwhile the Philistines were not heedless of this movement among the Israelites. No sooner did they hear of the defeat of their garrison in Gibeah than they assembled a formidable force, which seemed sufficient to overwhelm all opposition. It was composed of 3000 chariots of war, 6000 horsemen, and " people as the sand upon the sea-shore for multitude." The enthusiasm of the disarmed Israelites evaporated in the presence of this powerful force ; and the army of Saul diminished every day, as great numbers of the men stole away to seek refuge in caves, in woods, in rocks, in towers, and in pits.

Saul had exhibited his inability of understanding his true position, or his disposition to regard himself as an independent sovereign, by entering upon or provoking this war without consulting, through Samuel or the priest, the Divine will. Although not formally so declared, it was the well-understood practice of the Hebrew constitution, that no war *against any other than the doomed nations of Canaan* would be undertaken without the previous consent and promised assistance of the Great King. Yet Saul, without any such authority, had taken measures which were certain to produce a war with the Philistines. He probably thought that the aggressions of the Philistines, and their existing position as the oppressors of Israel, and their intrusion into the Hebrew territory, made his undertaking so obviously just and patriotic as to render a direct authorisation superfluous, as its refusal could not be supposed: nor are we quite sure that in this he was mistaken. Be this as it may, Samuel was not willing that such a precedent should be established; and therefore he had appointed to meet Saul on a particular day at Gilgal, " to offer burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, and to show him what he should do," that is, both to propitiate the Lord, as on other occasions, and to advise Saul how to act in carrying on the war. On the appointed day Samuel did not arrive as soon as the king expected. The prophet probably delayed his coming on purpose to test his fidelity and obedience. Saul failed in this test. Seeing his force hourly diminishing by desertions ; and in the pride of his fancied independence, considering that he had as much right as the Egyptian and other kings to perform the priestly functions, he ordered the victims to be brought, and offered them himself upon the altar. This usurpation of the priestly office by one who had no natural authority as an Aaronite, nor any special authorisation as a prophet, was decisive of the character and the fate of Saul. If the principles of the theocracy were to be preserved, and if the political supremacy of Jehovah was at all to be maintained, it was indispensably necessary that the first manifestation by the kings of autocratic dispositions and of self-willed assumption of superiority to the law, should be visited by severe examples of punishment; for if not checked in the beginnings, the growth would have been fatal to the constitution. It will hence appear that the punishments which Saul incurred for this and other acts manifesting the same class of dispositions, were not so disproportioned to his offences, or so uncalled for by the occasions of the state, as some persons have been led to imagine.

Saul had scarcely made an end of offering his sacrifices before he was apprised of the approach of Samuel, and went forth to meet him. The apology he made to the prophet for what he had done,—that his force was diminishing, and that he was afraid that if he delayed any longer the Philistines would fall upon him before sacrifices had been offered to Jehovah —showed little of that reliance upon the Divine King, which every Hebrew general was expected to manifest; and but little anxiety to receive these prophetic counsels which Samuel

had promised to deliver. Under nearly similar circumstances, how different was the conduct of Gideon, who gained immortal honour by these theocratic sentiments which enabled him to leave to his successors a memorable example of confidence in God! Samuel saw through the hollowness of Saul's apology, and warned him that by such sentiments as he entertained, and such conduct as he manifested, he was rendering himself unworthy to be the founder of a royal house, inasmuch as he could not become a pattern to his successors; and that by persevering in such a course he would compel the appointment of one more worthy than himself to reign over Israel, and to be the father of a kingly race. Samuel then retired from Gilgal, leaving Saul to carry on, as he saw best, the war he had undertaken.

On numbering his remaining force, Saul found that but 600 men remained with him. With a less force than this, enemies as formidable as the Philistines had in former times been defeated. But Saul, entirely overlooking, or distrusting, that Divine assistance which every Hebrew leader in a just war was entitled to expect, and, regarding only the disparity of his force, felt that it would be imprudent to engage or oppose so vast an army with a mere handful of disheartened men. He therefore retired from the field, and threw himself into the re-conquered fortress of Gibeah. On discovering his retreat, the Philistines sent three powerful detachments in different directions to ravage the country, while the main body of their army still remained encamped near Michmash.

In this extremity an entire change was wrought in the aspect of affairs through the daring valour of Jonathan. Accompanied only by his armour-bearer, he withdrew secretly from the camp, and, by climbing, opened himself a passage to one of the outposts of the Philistines, upon the summit of a cliff, deemed inaccessible, and therefore not very strongly guarded; and, penetrating to the enemy by so new and unexpected a path, he killed the advanced piquets, and, supported by his follower, slew all whom his hand encountered, and bore disorder and alarm into the camp of the Philistines, then much weakened by the detachments we have mentioned. The cries which arose from this part of the camp confounded and terrified the more distant parts; so that, aware of the presence of an enemy, which yet did not appear to them, they turned their arms against one another, and destroyed themselves with the blind fury of despairing men. The clamour which arose in the Philistine camp was heard by the Israelites. Saul at first was willing to go through the form of consulting the Lord by *urim;* but the confusion increasing in the Philistine camp, he deemed it a time for action rather than counsel; and directing the priest to forbear, he hastened to join his valiant son, whose absence was now known, and to whom this disorder was rightly attributed. The enemy were already flying in all directions, and Saul, with his small band, committed terrible havoc upon the fugitives. While thus engaged, his force increased with still greater rapidity than it had previously diminished; for not only did the Hebrew captives take the opportunity of making their escape and joining their king, but great numbers came forth from their lurking places to join in the pursuit; so that Saul soon found himself at the head of 6000 men. The rash and inconsiderate king, in his determination to make the most of his advantage, laid an interdictive curse upon any of his people who should taste food until the evening. Not only were the pursuers weakened and exhausted by the strict abstinence thus enjoined, but Jonathan, unaware of this interdict, unwittingly transgressed it, by tasting a little wild honey which he met with in his way through a forest.

In the evening the famished people, being then released from the interdict, flew ravenously upon the prey of cattle, and, in their impatience, began to devour the raw and living flesh. This being a transgression of the law, which forbade meat, not properly exsanguinated, to be eaten, Saul, who was really rather zealous to observe the law when it did not interfere with his own objects, interposed, and ordered the meat to be properly and legally slaughtered and prepared for food.

The people being now refreshed, Saul proposed to continue the pursuit during the night, but deemed it prudent first to consult the Lord, through the priest. No answer was given. This Saul interpreted to intimate that his solemn interdict had been transgressed, and, again unreasoning and rash, he swore that even were the transgressor his own son Jonathan, he

should surely be put to death. It was Jonathan: the lot determined this. His father told him he must die; but the people, full of admiration of the young prince, protested that not a hair of his head should suffer damage, and thus saved his life.

This campaign, although concluded without a battle, was not the less productive of durable advantage. The glory which Saul acquired by it strengthened his authority among his own people, and henceforth no enemy to which he could be opposed seemed invincible to him. We see him, indeed, waging war, in turn, against Moab, Ammon, and Edom, and against the Amalekites and the Philistines; and in whatever direction he turned his arms, he obtained the victory and honour. Valiant himself, he esteemed valour in others; and whenever he discovered a man of ability and courage, he endeavoured to draw him near to himself, and to attach him to his person. The qualities most prized by Saul were eminently possessed by his own cousin Abner, and he became "captain of the host," or generalissimo of the army of Israel.

The several expeditions of Saul against the enemies of Israel took up, at intervals, the space of five or six years. During these years, Samuel, without further interference in political affairs, continued to watch the civil interests of the people, and to administer justice between them. The authority which he still preserved in Israel was very great, and probably not considerably less than it had been at any former time.

About the tenth or eleventh year of Saul's reign, God made known to the prophet that the iniquity of the Amalekites had not reached its height, and that the time was fully come when the old sentence of utter extermination should be executed. Saul was charged with its execution; and his commission, as delivered to him by Samuel, was expressed in the most absolute terms, and left the king no option to spare aught that breathed. Under this supreme order, the king made a general call upon all the tribes, which brought together an army of 200,000 men, among whom there were but 10,000 men of Judah. The deficiency of that tribe in supplying its due proportion is probably not noticed by the historian on this and on a former occasion, without some object; and that object probably was to convey the intimation that since the sceptre had been of old promised to that tribe, it was discontented at the government of Saul, and less hearty than the other tribes in its obedience.

The king led his army into the territory of Amalek. There he made the most able disposition of his forces, seized the most favourable positions, and then turned his advantages against the enemy. A general action followed, in which the Israelites were victorious, and they pursued the Amalekites to their most distant and last retreats. Agag, the king, was taken alive with all his riches. Blinded by his ambition and his avarice to the danger of acting in defiance of a most positive and public command from God himself, Saul determined to spare the life of Agag, and to preserve the more valuable parts of all the booty from destruction; but with a most insulting or weak mockery of obedience, "all that was vile and refuse they utterly destroyed." He then led home his triumphant army, and paused in the land of Eastern Carmel,* where he erected a monument of the most important and distant expedition in which he had hitherto been engaged. He then passed on to Gilgal. Samuel came to him there soon after his arrival, and at once charged him with his disobedience. Saul behaved with a degree of confusion and meanness which we should scarcely have expected from him, and which the consciousness of wrong-doing only can explain. He affirmed and persisted that he *had* obeyed the Divine command, when everything before and around him evinced that he had not. In the end he confessed that he had acted wrong; but then excused himself by laying one part of it on the zeal of the people to sacrifice the best of the cattle to Jehovah, and part to his own fear of restraining them from it. It was a great grief to Samuel to hear the king of Israel betray such meanness of soul, in palliating an unjustifiable action; and, conceding the truth of the latter statement, he asked with severity, "Hath Jehovah as much delight in burnt-offerings and in sacrifices as in obedience to his voice? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice; and to hearken than the fat of rams." He then continued authoritatively,

* On the south-western borders of the Dead Sea, and which we call "Eastern Carmel" to distinguish it from "Mount Carmel," which lies westward, on the Mediterranean.

as a prophet, to announce his rejection from being the founder of a royal house, as the fixed purpose of the Divine King whose imperative commands he had publicly disobeyed, or assumed a power of dispensing with, to such an extent as suited his convenience. It would be wrong to consider this as the sole act or omission for which this rejection was incurred. It was but one of many acts by which he indicated an utter incapability of apprehending his true position, and in consequence manifested dispositions and conduct utterly at variance with the principles of government which the welfare of the state, and, indeed, the very objects of its foundation, made it most essential to maintain. Unless the attempts at absolute independence made by Saul were checked, or visited with some signal mark of the Divine displeasure, the precedents established by the first king were likely to become the rule to future sovereigns. And hence the necessity, now at the beginning, of peculiar strictness, or even of severity, for preventing the establishment of bad rules and precedents for future reigns.

Saul at first betrayed more anxiety about present appearances than ultimate results; and he entreated Samuel to remain, and honour him in the sight of the people, by joining with him in an act of worship to Jehovah. Samuel refused; and as he turned to go away, the king caught hold of the skirt of his robe to detain him, with such force, that the skirt was rent off. "So hath God," said the prophet, "rent from thee, this day, the kingdom of Israel, and given it to thy neighbour who is better than thee. Nor will *He who gives victory to Israel* lie or repent; for he is not a man, that he should repent." The expression which we have here particularly indicated was probably intended and understood as a further rebuke for the triumphal monument which Saul had erected in Carmel, and whereby he seemed to claim to himself that honour for the recent victory which, under the principles of the theocracy, was due to God only. Samuel, however, complied with the earnest wish of the king, and returned with him to the camp. There acting on the stern injunction which Saul had neglected, the prophet commanded the king of the Amalekites, by whose sword many mothers in Israel had been made childless, to be put to death. When the prophet and the king separated, the former proceeded to his usual residence at Ramah, and went no more to see Saul to the day of his death. Yet as he had a great regard for a man who, with all his faults, had many good natural qualities which would well have fitted him for rule in a simple human monarchy, and who, moreover, was faithful and even zealous for Jehovah, as his God, however deficient in obedience to him as his King, the prophet continued long to mourn greatly for him, and to bewail the doom which it had been his painful duty to declare.

After fifteen years, the Lord rebuked Samuel for this useless repining, and commanded him to proceed to Bethlehem, there to anoint the man worthier than Saul, whom he had chosen to fill his forfeited place, and to become the founder of a royal house. This was a delicate mission; for Samuel knew enough of Saul to fear that he would not scruple to put even himself to death if the fact came to his knowledge. He therefore veiled his real object under the form of a public sacrifice, which, in his prophetic character, he had a right to enjoin. That he still retained his authority as civil judge is evinced by the alarm which his unexpected visit occasioned to the elders of Bethlehem, who "trembled" at his coming, for fear it should be not "peaceably," but in judgment.

The family to which Samuel was sent was that of Jesse, the grandson of Boaz and Ruth, and, as such, a person of consideration in that place. Jesse was the father of eight sons, all of whom were present in Bethlehem, save the youngest, David by name, who was abroad with his father's flock. The whole family was invited by the prophet to be present at his sacrifice. Samuel knew that the destined king was to be found among Jesse's sons, but knew not as yet for which of them that distinction was intended. Still influenced by those general prepossessions in favour of such personal qualities as he had formerly beheld in Saul with complacency and admiration, Samuel no sooner beheld the commanding and stately figure of Jesse's eldest son, Eliab, than he concluded that "the Lord's anointed was before him." For this he received the striking rebuke, "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for Jehovah seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but Jehovah looketh on the heart." It further appeared that no one of

the other sons of Jesse then present was the object of the Divine choice. On this, Samuel, with some surprise, asked Jesse whether he had other sons; and learning that the youngest, a mere youth of fifteen years old, was abroad in the fields, he caused him to be sent for. When he arrived, Samuel was struck by his uncommonly handsome appearance, especially by a freshness of complexion unusual in that country, and by the singular fire and beauty of his eyes. The Divine choice was at once intimated to him, "Arise, anoint him, for this is he!" As in the case of Saul himself, this precious anointing was significant only of the Divine intention and choice. As Saul had returned to his fields, so David returned to his flock. The path to the throne was to be opened by circumstances which did not yet appear. The anointing was the sign and seal of an ultimate intention. For the present David was not more a king, nor Saul less one, than before.

The doom of exclusion had been pronounced upon Saul at a time when he was daily strengthening himself on the throne, and increasing in power, popularity, and fame; and when his eldest son, Jonathan, stood, and deserved to stand, so high in the favour of all the people, that no man could, according to human probabilities, look upon any one else as likely to succeed him in the throne. But when the excitement of war and victory had subsided, and the king had leisure to consider and brood over the solemn and declaredly irrevocable sentence which the prophet had pronounced, a very serious effect was gradually produced upon his mind and character; for he was no longer prospered and directed by God, but left a prey to his own gloomy mind. The consciousness that he had not met the requirements of the high vocation to which, "when he was little in his own sight," he had been called, together with the threatened loss of his dominion and the possible destruction of his house, made him jealous, sanguinary, and irritable, and occasionally threw him into fits of the most profound and morbid melancholy. This is what, in the language of Scripture, is called "the evil spirit that troubled him." That it was not a case of demoniacal possession, as some have been led by this form of expression to suppose, is obvious from the effects to which we shall presently advert. Nor was it needful; for, as acting upon the character of man, earth contains not a more evil spirit than the guilty or troubled mind abandoned to its own impulses.

Not long after David had been anointed by Samuel, the mental malady of Saul gathered such strength—the fits of his mad melancholy became so long and frequent, that some remedial measures appeared necessary. Remembering that Saul had always been remarkably sensible to the influence of sweet sounds, it occurred to his friends that it might be attended with good effects, were an able musician retained at court, to play before the king, when his fits of gloom and horror came upon him. Saul himself approved of this advice, and directed that a person with the suitable qualifications should be sought. This reminded one of the courtiers how skilfully and sweetly he had heard the youngest son of Jesse play upon the harp; and in mentioning this to the king he also took occasion to commend David as a young man of known valour, prudent in conduct, and very comely in his person. From this and other corroborative circumstances, it is easy to perceive that music was now, and much earlier, cultivated by the Hebrews as a private accomplishment and solace. It formed their most usual relaxation, and divided their time with the labours of agriculture and the care of flocks.

The report which he had heard engaged Saul to send to Jesse, demanding his son David. The old man accordingly sent him to court, together with such a present to the king as the customs of the age—and of the East in all ages, required as an homage. It consisted of a quantity of bread, a skin-bottle of wine, and a kid.

Thus, in the providence of God, an opening was made for David, whereby he might become acquainted with the manners of the court, the business of government, and the affairs and interests of the several tribes, and was put in the way of securing the equally important advantage of becoming extensively known to the people. These were training circumstances for the high destinies which awaited him. Saul himself, ignorant that in him he beheld the "man worthier than himself," on whom the inheritance of his throne was to devolve, contributed to these preparations. He received the youthful minstrel with fervour; and, won by his engaging disposition and the beauties of his mind and person, not less than by the melody

of his harp, became much attached to him. The personal bravery of David, also, did not long remain unnoticed by the veteran hero, who soon elevated him to the honourable and



[Playing on the Harp before a King.]

confidential station of his armour-bearer—having obtained Jesse's consent to allow his son to remain in attendance upon him. His presence was a great solace and relief to Saul; for whenever he fell into his fits of melancholy, David played on his harp before him; and its soft and soothing strains soon calmed his troubled spirit, and brought peace to his soul.

In the twenty six years which had passed since the signal overthrow of the Philistines at Michmash, that people had recruited their strength, and at last* deemed themselves able to wipe out the disgrace they then incurred, and to recover their previous superiority over the Israelites. They recommenced the war by invading the territory of Judah: Saul marched against them; and the two armies encamped in the face of each other, on the sides of opposite mountains which a valley separated. While thus stationed the Hebrews were astonished and terrified to behold a man of enormous stature, between nine and ten feet high,† advance from the camp of the Philistines attended by his armour-bearer. His name was Goliah. He was arrayed in complete mail, and armed with weapons proportioned to his bulk. He stood forth between the hosts, and, as authorised by the Philistines, who were confident that his match could not be found, proposed, with great arrogance of language, that the question of tribute and servitude should be determined by the result of a single combat between himself and any champion which might be opposed to him. The Israelites were quite as much dismayed at the appearance of Goliah, and at the proposal which he made, as the Philistines could have expected, or as the Philistines themselves would have been under the same circumstances. No heart in Israel was found stout enough to dare the encounter with this dreadful Philistine; nor was any man then present willing to take on his single arm the serious consequences of the possible result. Then finding that no one of riper years or higher

* B.C. 1080, five years after the anointing of David.

† See the note on Giants, commencing at p. 329.

pretensions offered himself to the combat, David presented himself before Saul, whom he attended as his armour-bearer, and said, "Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine." But Saul told him that he was unequal to such a contest, "For thou art but a youth, but he a man of war from his youth." The reply of David was equally forcible and modest:—"Thy servant tended his father's flock; and when there came a lion or a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock, then I pursued him and smote him, and snatched it from his mouth; and if he rose against me, I caught him by the beard, and smote him, and slew him. Both lions and bears hath thy servant smitten, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them. Let me go and smite him, and take away the reproach from Israel; for who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the hosts of the living God?" He added, "Jehovah who delivered me from the power of lions and bears will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." Saul had been too little accustomed to this mode of speaking and feeling not to be struck by it. Although he had himself not been prone to exhibit *military* confidence in God, he perceived that such a confidence now supplied the only prospect of success; he therefore said, "Go; and may Jehovah be with thee!" He would fain have arrayed him in his own complete armour; but David rejected this as an incumbrance, and stepped lightly forward in his ordinary dress, and without sword or shield, or spear, having only in his right hand a sling—with the use of which early pastoral habits had made him familiar—and in his left a little bag, containing five smooth pebbles picked up from the small brook that then meandered and still meanders through the valley of Elah.* The giant was astonished, and felt insulted that a mere youth should be sent forth to contend with so redoubted a champion as himself; and availing himself of the pause which the ancient champions were wont to take to abuse, threaten, and provoke each other, he cried, "Am I a dog, that thou comest against me with staves?" He then cursed him by his god, and, like the old Homeric heroes, threatened to give his flesh to the fowls of the air and to the beasts of the field. David's reply, conceived in the finest and truest spirit of the theocracy, at once satisfies us that we behold in him the man fit to reign over the peculiar people. "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the hosts of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will Jehovah deliver thee into my hand; and I will take thy head from thee, and I will give thy carcass, and the carcasses of the host of the Philistines, this day to the fowls of the air and to the wild beasts of the earth, *that the whole earth may know that there is a God in Israel.* And all this assembly shall know that Jehovah can save without sword or spear; for the battle is Jehovah's, and he will deliver you into our hands." On this the enraged giant strode forward; and David hastened to fit a stone to his sling; and he flung it with so true an aim that it smote the Philistine in the only vulnerable part that was not cased in armour, his forehead, and buried itself deep in his brain. He then ran and cut off the monster's head with his own sword, thus fulfilling the prediction he had just uttered. A few minutes after he had gone forth, he returned, and laid the head and sword of the giant at the feet of Saul.

The overthrow of their champion struck a panic into the Philistines. They fled, and were pursued, with great slaughter, even to their own country, by the Israelites, who then returned and plundered their camp.

The honour which David won by this splendid achievement was too great for his safety. Saul could not but feel that the sort of spirit by which the youthful hero had been actuated was precisely that which on many preceding occasions he himself *ought* to have manifested, and for not doing which the doom of exclusion had been pronounced against him. The feeling that David was really the hero of the recent fight, was also not pleasant to one so jealous

* "We entered the famous Terebinthine Vale, renowned for centuries as the field of the victory gained by David over the uncircumcised Philistines. Nothing has occurred to alter the face of the country. The very brook out of which David chose the five smooth stones has been noticed by many a thirsty pilgrim journeying from Jaffa to Jerusalem, all of whom must pass it in their way. The ruins of goodly edifices, indeed, attest the religious veneration entertained in later periods for this hallowed spot; but even these are now become so insignificant that they are scarcely discernible, and nothing can be said to interrupt the native dignity of this memorable scene."—Clarke.

of his military glory. And when the women came forth from their towns to greet the returning conquerors with their instruments of music, and sang responsively to their tabrets and their viols,—

> " Saul has smitten his thousands,
> But David has his ten thousands slain,"

the indignation of the king was provoked to the utmost. " To me," he said, " they have ascribed but thousands, and to David tens of thousands: what more can he have but the kingdom ?" It would therefore seem that this preference of David to him by the women in their songs first suggested to him the possibility that he was the man, worthier than himself, who was destined to succeed him and to supersede his descendants : and the notion having once occurred, he probably made such inquiries as enabled him to conclude or to discover that such was the fact. His knowledge of it appears soon after; and we know that from this time forward David became the object, not merely of his envy and jealousy, but of his hatred and dislike. Yet he was afraid, if he as yet wished, to do him any open injury; but as he could not bear him any longer in his former close attendance about his person, he threw him more into the *public* service, intrusting to him the command of a thousand men. From his subsequent expressions and conduct, it seems likely that the king expected that the inexperience of youth might lead David into such errors in this responsible public station as would either give him occasion to act against him, or would seriously damage his character with the people. But if such were his views, they were grievously disappointed. In his public station " David behaved himself wisely in all his ways, for Jehovah was with him ;" and the opportunity which was given him only served to evince his talents for business and his attention to it; and, consequently, to increase and establish that popularity among the people which his character and exploits had already won. And so it was, that the dislike and apprehensions of Saul increased in proportion to the abilities and discretion which David evinced, and to the popularity which he acquired.

The king was under the full operation of those feelings, which as yet he durst not avow, when he happened to learn that his daughter Michal had become attached to David. This was far from displeasing him, as he thought it gave him an opportunity of entrapping the son of Jesse to his own destruction. He promised her to him ; but on the condition of so difficult an enterprise against the Philistines, as he fully expected would ensure his death. But David, always victorious, returned in a few days with more numerous pledges of his valour than the king had ventured to demand; and he was then married to Michal, who could not with any decency be refused to him.

In some subsequent actions against the Philistines, with whom a desultory warfare was still carried on, David displayed such courage and military skill as greatly increased his renown in Israel, and increased in the same proportion the animosity of Saul. His hate became at last so ungovernable, that he could no longer confine the dark secret to his own bosom, or limit himself to underhand attempts against the life of Jesse's son. He avowed it to his son Jonathan and to his courtiers, charging them to take any favourable opportunity of putting him to death. He knew not yet of the strong attachment which subsisted between Jonathan and David,—that his noble son, rising far above all selfishness, pride, or envy, loved the son of Jesse even " as his own soul." He heard the command with horror, and apprised David of it, counselling him to hide himself until he should have an opportunity of remonstrating on the subject privately with the king. This he did with such effect, displaying the services and fidelity of David with such force, that the better reason of Saul prevailed for the time, and he solemnly swore to make no further attempt against his life.

But not long after, all the evil passions of Saul were again roused by the increased renown which David obtained, by a splendid victory over the Philistines. He had scarce returned to court before he had a narrow escape of being pinned to the wall by a javelin which the king threw at him in one of those fits of frenzied melancholy, which the son of Jesse was at that moment endeavouring to sooth by playing on his harp.

David then withdrew to his own house. But the king had now committed himself, and henceforth threw aside all disguise or restraint. He sent some of his attendants to watch the



[Throwing a Javelin.]

house; and David would undoubtedly have been murdered the next morning, had not his faithful wife managed his escape during the night, by letting him down in a basket through one of the



[Escape from a Window.]

windows. In the morning, when the man demanded admittance with the intention of slaying her husband, Michal told them he was very ill and confined to his bed; and in proof of it showed them the bed, in which she had placed a figure made up so as to present the appearance of a body covered with the bed-clothes. This news they carried to the king, who sent them back with orders to bring him alive in his bed. By this means Michal's artifice was discovered, and her father was so enraged, that, for her own safety, she made him believe that it was to save her own life she had consented to it.

As the only revenge then in his power, Saul took away Michal, and gave her in marriage to another; and the story which she had made up, that David had put her in fear of her life, probably precluded her from making that strenuous opposition which she might otherwise have done.

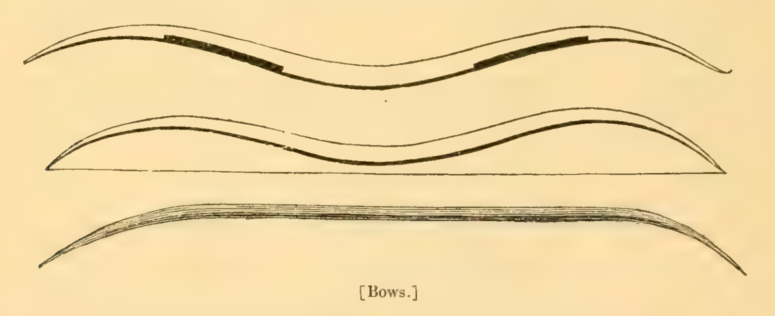
David himself escaped to Ramah, where he acquainted Samuel with all the king's behaviour to him. Samuel took him to Naioth, which seems to have been a kind of school or college of the prophets, in the neighbourhood of Ramah, over which Samuel presided. Saul soon heard where he was; and so reckless was he now become, and so madly bent on his murderous object, that he would not respect even this asylum, but sent messengers to bring David to him. These, when they beheld the company of prophets, with Samuel at their head, "prophesying," or singing hymns, fell into an ecstasy, and "prophesied" in like manner. The same happened to a second and a third party. At last Saul determined to go himself; and in his rage he probably intended to slay Samuel also for sheltering David. Indeed, that the youth had gone to Samuel, and was sheltered by him, must have confirmed his conviction that David was his appointed successor, if he did not yet know, as he probably did, that the son of Jesse had actually been anointed by the prophet. But no sooner had the king beheld what had so strongly affected his messengers, then he also, as had happened to him in his happier days, "prophesied," and lay in an ecstatic trance, divested of his outer garment, all that day and night.

This gave David an opportunity to leave the neighbourhood; and he repaired to Gibeah, where the king resided, and where Jonathan then was, to seek a private interview with that valuable friend. Jonathan thought himself fully acquainted with all the intentions of his father, and would not believe that he really designed the death of David. But the latter was well assured of it; and thought that Saul, having become acquainted with their friendship, had concealed his full purpose from Jonathan. It was, however, agreed between them that the conduct of the king on an approaching occasion, should be deemed to determine his ultimate intentions; and that meanwhile David should keep himself concealed. The two friends then walked forth into the fields. Jonathan then avowed to David his conviction that he, and not himself, was the destined successor of Saul; and, with rare generosity of spirit and abandonment of self, he expressed his cheerful assent to this, and only desired to receive the pledge of David that, if himself alive when he became king, protection should be granted to him from the designs which evil men might entertain; and that if not himself living, kindness should be extended to his family for his sake. This was a matter in which he might be allowed at this time to feel more than usual anxiety, as it appears, from a comparison of dates, that a son, Mephibosheth, had lately been born to him. Reciprocally, he would pledge himself to protect the life of David, to the extent of his power, from the designs of Saul and his other enemies. These things they swore before God to each other, and entered together into a covenant of peace and love.

It seems that by this time Saul lived in considerable state. At the recurrence of the new moons, he was accustomed to entertain his principal officers at meat. Such a feast was now near at hand; and it appears that Saul, who knew that David had returned to Gibeah, expected that, notwithstanding what had passed, he would make his appearance at this feast, as it would seem that non-attendance was regarded as an offensive neglect. Most probably the king thought that David might regard the attempt which had been made upon his life as mere frenetic impulse, not indicative of any deliberate intention against him. The first day of the feast, the place which belonged to David at the king's table was vacant; but Saul then

made no remark, thinking the absence might be accidental. But when the son of Jesse made no appearance on the second day, the king put some questions to Jonathan, who excused David's absence, alleging that it was by his permission and consent. On this Saul broke forth into the grossest abuse of Jonathan, and assuring him that his succession to the throne could never be secure while David lived, concluded with, "Wherefore now send for him; for he shall surely die." And when Jonathan ventured to remonstrate, "Wherefore shall he be slain? What hath he done?" the maddened king threw his javelin to smite him. That he could thus treat his own son, on whom, in fact, all the hopes that remained to him were centred, lessens our wonder at his behaviour to David, and at the other acts of madness of which he was guilty. By this Jonathan knew that the king really intended to destroy his friend. He therefore took his bow, and went forth, attended by a lad, as if to shoot in the field where David lay hid; for it had been agreed upon between them that the manner in which the arrows were shot, and the expressions used by the archer to the lad who collected the arrows after they had





[Bows.]

been discharged, was to be a sign intimating to David the course he was to take; thus preventing the danger which might accrue to both from another interview. But when the unfavourable sign had been given, which he knew would render his friend a fugitive, Jonathan could not resist the desire again to commune with him before he departed. He therefore sent away the lad, and as soon as he was gone "David arose out of a place towards the south, and fell on his face towards the ground, and three times did obeisance; and they kissed each other, and wept one with another, with great lamentation."

After taking leave of Jonathan, David took his journey westward, with the intention of putting himself beyond the reach of Saul, by going to the land of the Philistines, who were not at that time in actual hostilities with the Israelites, and with whom alone the enmity of Saul was not likely to operate to his disadvantage. In his way, attended by a few young men who were attached to him, he came to the town of Nob, belonging to the priests, about twelve miles from Gibeah, and in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem and Anathoth. To this place the tabernacle had at this time been removed. We are not made acquainted with the precise occasion of its removal from Shiloh; but it was probably consequent upon the destruction of that town in the war with the Philistines. At this place he was received, as his rank and renown demanded, by the high-priest Ahimelech, whose surprise at seeing him

he thought himself obliged to dispel, by the false and unseemly pretence that he had been sent by the king on private business of importance. But taking notice of the presence of



[Eastern forms of obeisance.

one Doeg, an Edomite, the chief of Saul's shepherds, by whom he doubted not that he should be betrayed, he represented to Ahimelech that his business was urgent, and begged that he would supply some refreshment to himself and his men, after which he would continue his journey. The high-priest had nothing to offer but bread which had lain a week on the table of shew-bread in the sanctuary; and although by the priests only this might lawfully be eaten, he was induced by the alleged urgency of the occasion to give it to David and his men. David afterwards inquired for weapons; and was told there were none but the sword of Goliah, which, as a pious memorial of the victory over that proud blasphemer, had been deposited in the tabernacle. This at his desire was brought to him, and, having girded it on, he took leave of Ahimelech, and continued his journey till he reached the Philistine city of Gath, where he presented himself, or was brought, before Achish, the king of that place, or rather of the state of which that place was the denominating metropolis. It does not appear that David intended himself to be known; or if so, anticipated a more favourable reception: for when he found that he was recognised, and that the courtiers ominously represented him as that David to whom the maidens of Israel had in their songs ascribed the slaughter of tens of thousands of Philistines, and thousands only to Saul, dreading the result of such recollections, David feigned himself mad, with such success that Achish exclaimed, "Lo, ye see the man is mad; why have ye brought him to me? Have I need of madmen, that ye have brought this one to play the madman in my presence? Shall such a one come into my house?" He was therefore allowed to go where he pleased. He delayed not to avail himself of this advantage, and hastened into the territory of his own tribe of Judah, where he found shelter in the cave of Adullam. He was here joined by his parents and family, who probably deemed themselves unsafe in Bethlehem; and as soon as his retreat became known in the neighbourhood, his reputation attracted to him a considerable number of men hanging loose upon society, as in the somewhat analogous case of Jephthah. To understand some of their future operations under David, it is quite necessary to give them just that character, and no other, which they bear in the Scriptural record, which states that "Every one in distress, every one in debt, and

every one discontented, flocked to him; and he became chief over them, and there were with him about four hundred men."

From Adullam David took an opposite direction to that which he had first followed, and went into the land of Moab. Here he was well received; for the king consented to take the parents of the outcast under his protection, until the dawning of better days. They therefore remained among the Moabites until the troubles of their son ended with the life of Saul. But although he might himself have found greater safety in that land, it was important to his future interests that he should return to his own country, that his conduct, adventures, and persecutions there, might keep him alive in the minds and sympathies of the people. He did not himself plan anything with reference to the destination intended for him ultimately; but God, who best knew by what agencies to effect his purpose, sent the prophet Gad to command him to return into the land of Judah. He obeyed, and found shelter in the forest of Hareth.

Saul soon heard of David's return and the place of his retreat, and was greatly troubled; for, as his safety could not be the object of this move from the security which Moab afforded, he inferred that he had returned with the intention of acting offensively and vindictively against him when occasion or advantage offered. He therefore called together the officers of his court; and as there was not, as yet, any building or palace in which such assemblies could be held, the king sat upon a bank, under a tamarisk-tree, with his spear in his hand.* It seems that the persons present were chiefly Benjamites; and Saul, speaking as one distrustful of their fidelity, appealed to their selfish interests, asking on what grounds they, as Benjamites, could hope to be bettered by the son of Jesse; and complained that there were plots between him and his own son Jonathan, of which they knew, but that they were not sorry for him, nor would give any information to him. On this, Doeg, the Edomite, informed him of the assistance which David had received at Nob from the high-priest; but omitted to state, if he knew, the certainly false grounds on which that assistance had been claimed by David and given by the priest; and added, which was not true, that Ahimelech had "inquired of God" for him. On hearing this, Saul was highly enraged, and immediately sent for Ahimelech and all the priests of his family that were at Nob. When they arrived, the king fiercely charged him with his participation in what his jealous imagination tortured into a conspiracy of David against him. Ahimelech declared that he had entertained him merely as the king's son-in-law, and one employed on the king's business, and denied that he had consulted the sacred oracle on his behalf; but Saul, without listening to his statement, commanded his followers to slay them all. A dead stillness followed this order; and, finding that no one moved to obey it, the frantic king turned to Doeg and commanded him to fall upon them. The unscrupulous Edomite was ready in his obedience; and although the Israelites then present had refused to stain their own hands with the blood of the most sacred persons in the land, they had not sufficient spirit or principle to interpose in their behalf, but stood by and saw them slaughtered by Doeg and his myrmidons. Not fewer than eighty-five priests fell in this horrid massacre; and immediately after, Doeg, by Saul's order, of course, proceeded to Nob, and slew all that lived in it—man, woman, child, and beast. This was a further development of that judgment upon the house of Eli which had been pronounced of old; this was that deed in Israel of which it had been predicted that "both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle." The only individual of the family of the high-priest who escaped, was Abiathar, one of his sons. This person repaired to David, who was deeply afflicted at the intelligence which he brought, and desired him to remain with him.

Soon after this David heard that a party of Philistines had come up against the border-town of Keilah, with the view of taking away the produce of the harvest which the people of that town had lately gathered in. He greatly desired to march his troop to the relief of that place; but his men who, as might be expected from their character, were by no means dis-

* The spear was obviously used by him not more as a weapon than as a sceptre. As such it is several times mentioned. The earliest sceptres were, in fact, spears in many ancient nations.

tinguished for their courage or subordination, declined so bold an enterprise. At last, a distinct promise of victory from the sacred oracle, consulted by Abiathar who acted as priest, encouraged their obedience. They went and obtained a complete victory over the Philistines, delivering Keilah from the danger by which it was threatened. This and other instances of David's readiness, in his own precarious situation, to employ his resources against the enemies of his country, must have tended much to raise his character among the people, and to keep him before the public eye.

He now entered and remained in the town he had relieved, which Saul no sooner understood than he exclaimed "God hath delivered him into my hand ; for he is shut in by entering into a town that hath gates and bars;" and he delayed not to call together a powerful force, which he marched to besiege that place. But David, being apprised by the oracle that the people of Keilah, unmindful of their obligation to him, would deliver him up to the king if he remained there until his arrival, withdrew from the place at the head of a force now increased to 600 men. When Saul heard this, he discontinued his march against Keilah.

David now sought shelter in the eastern part of Judea, towards the Dead Sea. There were strong posts and obscure retreats in that quarter, among the mountains and the woods, to which he successively removed, as the motions of Saul dictated; for the king, now openly bent on his destruction, hastened to every place to which he heard that the son of Jesse had retreated, hunting him "like a partridge in the mountains." He was for some time in different parts of the wilderness of Ziph. He was sheltered by a wood in that wilderness, when Jonathan, becoming acquainted with his place of retreat, went to him, "to encourage him to trust in God." He said to him, "Fear not, for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee; and thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next to thee; *and that also Saul my father knoweth.*" Again the friends renewed their covenant before Jehovah, and parted—to meet no more. There is really nothing in all history finer than this love of Jonathan to David; it was, as the latter himself found occasion to describe it, "Wonderful, passing the love of women!" It was a noble spirit with which the son of the king held close to his heart, and admitted the superior claims of, the man destined to supersede him and his in the most splendid object of human ambition, which, on ordinary principles, he might have considered his just inheritance. But his were not ordinary principles, such as swayed the mind and determined the conduct of his father. His were the true principles of the theocracy, whereby he knew that Jehovah was the true king of Israel, and cheerfully submitted to his undoubted right to appoint whom he would as his regent, even to his own exclusion; and, with generous humility, was the first to recognise and admire the superior qualities of the man on whom it was known that his forfeited destinies had fallen. Yet lest, in our admiration of Jonathan's conduct, human virtue should seem too highly exalted, it may be well to remember, that the hereditary principle in civil government was as yet without precedent among the Hebrews, with whom sons had not yet learned to look to succeed their fathers in their public offices. None of the judges had transmitted their authority to their sons or relatives: and the only instance in which an attempt had been made (by Abimelech) to establish this hereditary principle, had most miserably failed. But the friendship of Jonathan and David is a passage in the history of the Hebrew kingdom from which the mind reluctantly withdraws. If it occurred in a fiction, it would be pointed out as an example of most refined and consummate art, that the author represents to us in such colours of beauty and truth the person he intends to set aside, and allows him so largely to share our sympathies and admiration with the hero of his tale.

Not long after this, some inhabitants of Ziph went to Gibeah and acquainted the king with the quarter in which David lay hid. Saul was so transported with joy at the news, that he heartily blessed them as the only people who had compassion upon him in his trouble; for by this time, if not before, it seems that his morbid fancy had fully persuaded him that David was really engaged in a conspiracy to take his life, and place the crown upon his own head. But David had timely intelligence that his retreat was betrayed, and withdrew southward into the wilderness of Moan. But Saul pursued him thither, and, with the design to surround

him, was already on one side of the mountain on the other side of which David lay, when he was providentially called off by intelligence of a sudden incursion into the country by the Philistines. He went and repulsed them; and then, at the head of three thousand men, returned to follow upon the tracks of Jesse's son—so inveterately was he now bent upon his fell purpose.

Meanwhile David had removed to the district of Engeddi, towards the south-western extremity of the Dead Sea, the caverns and rocky fastnesses of which offered many secure retreats. Saul pursued him into this region,* and one day entered a large cave, to repose himself during the heat of the day. Now it happened that David and his men were already in this cave; but being in the remote and dark inner extremity, were unperceived by the king; but he, being between them and the light which entered at the cave's mouth, was seen and recognised by them. As he lay asleep, David's men joyfully congratulated him that his enemy was now completely in his power. But they knew not what manner of spirit was in the son of Jesse. "Jehovah forbid," he said to them, "that I should do this thing to my master, the anointed of Jehovah, to stretch forth my hand against him; for the anointed of Jehovah is he;" and the men were with difficulty restrained by these words from putting the king to death. But that he might know how completely his life had been in the hands of the man whose life he sought, David went and cut off the skirt of his mantle. Saul at length arose, and left the cave, and went his way. David went out and called after him, "My lord, the king!" When Saul turned, David bowed himself reverently towards the earth, and proceeded in the most respectful terms to remonstrate against the injustice with which he had been treated and the inveteracy with which he was pursued. He charitably imputed the designs laid to his charge to the suggestions of evil-minded men; and in proof of their utter groundlessness, related what had happened in the cave, and produced the skirt to show how entirely the king's life had been in his power. Saul's naturally good feelings were touched by this generous forbearance, from one who knew that his own life was then sought by him: "Is that thy voice, my son David!" he cried, and his softened heart yielded refreshing tears, such as he had not lately been wont to shed. That which had been in David a forbearance resulting from the natural and spontaneous impulse of his own feelings, seemed to the king an act of superhuman virtue, which forced upon him the recognition that he was indeed that "worthier" man to whom the inheritance of his crown had been prophesied. Rendering good for evil was a new thing to him; and now, in the regard and admiration which it excited, he freely acknowledged the conviction he entertained,—"And now, behold, I know well that thou wilt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel will be established in thy hand. Swear now, therefore, to me, by Jehovah, that thou wilt not cut off my seed after me, and that thou wilt not destroy my name out of my father's house." The anxiety of the king, and even of Jonathan, on this point, seems to show (what has already appeared in the case of Abimelech) that it was even then, as it ever has been until lately, usual for Oriental kings to remove by death all those whose claims to the throne might seem superior or equal to their own, or whose presence might offer an alternative to the discontented: the intense horror with which the Hebrews regarded the prospect or fear of genealogical extinction, also contributes to explain the anxiety which both Saul and Jonathan felt on this point more than on any other. David took the oath required from him; Saul then returned to Gibeah, and David, who had little confidence in the permanency of the impression he had made, remained in his strongholds.

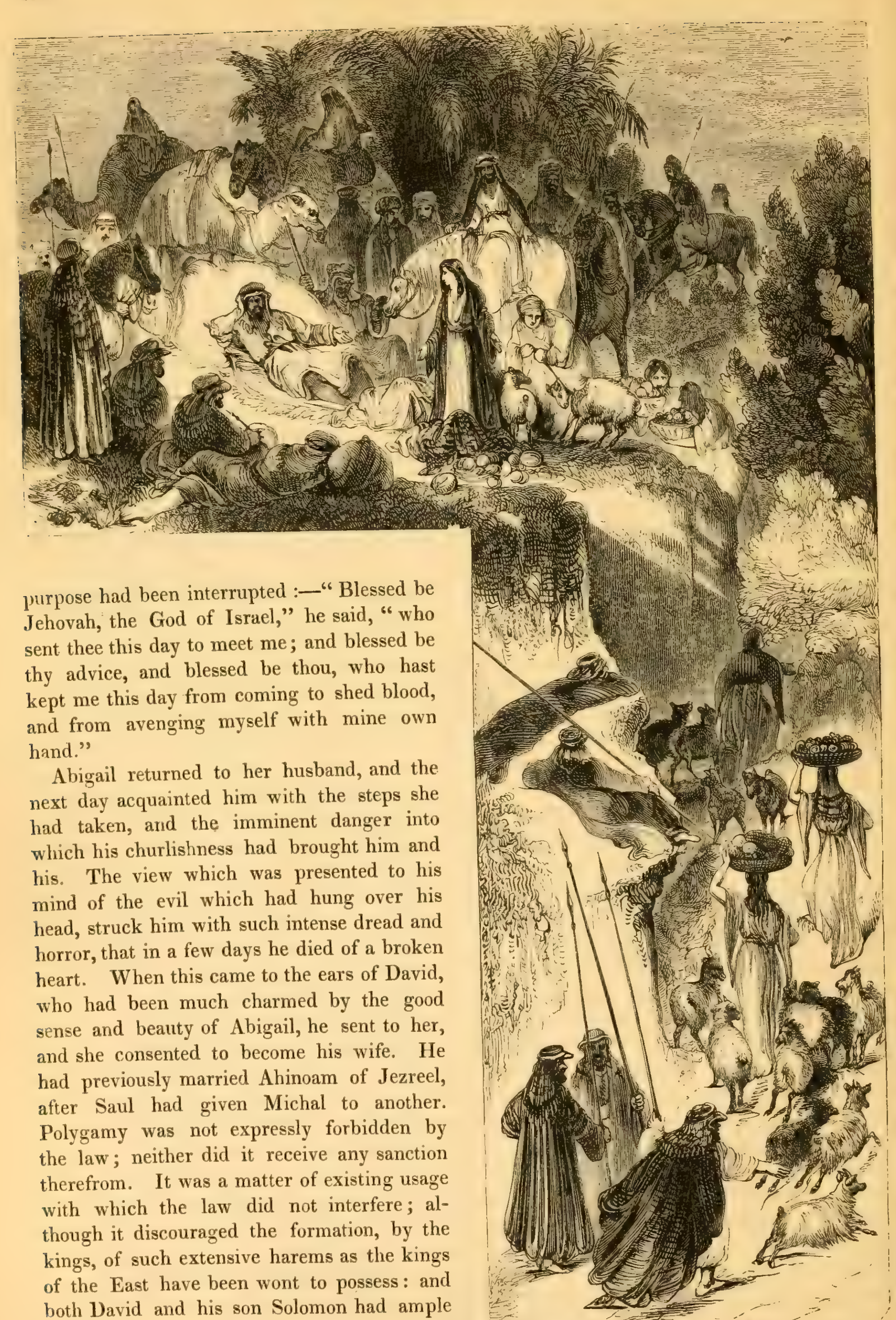
Very soon after this Samuel died, at the advanced age of ninety-two years,† after he had judged Israel fifty years, that is, twelve years alone, and thirty-eight years jointly with Saul; for there is no doubt that he retained his authority as civil judge to the end of his life. The death of this good man was lamented as a common calamity by all true Israelites, who assembled in great numbers to honour his funeral. He was buried in the garden of his own house at Ramah.

As David immediately after removed much further southward, even "into the wilderness

* Described in p. cxxvii. of the Physical History. † B.C. 1072.

of Paran," it would seem that, having no confidence in Saul's fits of right feeling, he was fearful of the consequences of the absence of that degree of moral restraint upon him which had existed while the prophet lived. The southern country offers, in the proper season, excellent pastures, away to which those of Judah, who had "large possessions of cattle," were wont to send their flocks during a part of the year. The advantage offered by the free use of these open pastures was, however, in some degree counterbalanced by the danger from the prowling Arab tribes with which they sometimes came in contact. David probably supported his men during the eight months of his stay in this region by acting against those tribes, and making spoil of their cattle. And as their hand was against every man, it was natural that every man's hand should be against them; the rather, as we may be sure, from their general conduct, that they lost no occasions of oppressing or plundering the people inhabiting, or pasturing their flocks, along or near the southern frontier. Thus the presence of David's troop was, for that reason, a great advantage to the shepherds, as he had by this time secured sufficient control over his men to oblige them to respect the property of the Israelites. And this was, at least in the feelings of the people, no small thing in a body of men, living abroad with swords in their hands, and obliged, as they were, to collect their subsistence in the best way they could. Among those who were advantaged by this, none were more so than the shepherds of Nabal, a man of large possessions in Carmel. When David returned northward, he heard that Nabal was making great preparations for the entertainment of his people during the shearing of his 3000 sheep; and being then greatly pressed for provisions, he sent some of his young men to this person to salute him respectfully in his name, and to request some small supply out of the abundance he had provided. Now in point of fact, according to all usage, Nabal ought to have anticipated this request, as soon as he learned that one who had protected his property in the wilderness was then in his neighbourhood. But Nabal was "churlish and evil in all his manners, and irritable as a dog." This character, his insulting answer to the message fully supported:—"Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse? *There be many servants now-a-days that break away, every man from his master.* Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my flesh, which I have killed for my shearers, and give it to men whom I know not whence they be?" When this answer was brought back to David, he was highly enraged, and ordered his men to gird on their swords; and with 400 of them (leaving 200 to protect the baggage) he set forth with the rash and cruel purpose of destroying the churl and all that belonged to him. The provocation, although very great, and not likely to be overlooked by a military man, was certainly not such as to justify this barbarous design. Its execution was, however, averted by Abigail, the wife of Nabal, who is described as "a woman of good understanding and beautiful in form." Those shepherds who had been in the wilderness with the flocks, and were sensible of the value of that protection which David's troop had rendered, greatly disapproved of their master's conduct. They therefore reported the whole matter to their mistress, who appears to have had that real authority in the household which a woman of sense always has had in the house of even a brutal fool. She concurred in their apprehensions as to the probable consequences, and with a promptitude which bears out the character given to her, decided on the proper steps to avert them. While Nabal was eating and drinking, even to drunkenness, at the feast, she made up an elegant and liberal present, consisting of 200 loaves of bread, two skin-bottles of wine, five measures of parched corn, five sheep ready dressed, 200 clusters of raisins, and 200 cakes of figs; and having placed all this on asses, she set forth with suitable attendance to meet the enraged hero. She soon met him and his men, on full march to Carmel; and after rendering him her most respectful homage, she spoke to him with such fine tact and prudence, that his passion grew calm under her hand; and she convinced him that the deed which he contemplated would cause the weight of innocent blood to lie heavy on his conscience in after days. Being thus made to feel that he had allowed the bitterness of "a blockhead's insult"* to sink too deeply in his soul, he felt really thankful that his fell

* "Fate never wounds more deep the gen'rous heart,
Than when *a blockhead's insult* points the dart."—JOHNSON.



purpose had been interrupted :—"Blessed be Jehovah, the God of Israel," he said, "who sent thee this day to meet me; and blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou, who hast kept me this day from coming to shed blood, and from avenging myself with mine own hand."

Abigail returned to her husband, and the next day acquainted him with the steps she had taken, and the imminent danger into which his churlishness had brought him and his. The view which was presented to his mind of the evil which had hung over his head, struck him with such intense dread and horror, that in a few days he died of a broken heart. When this came to the ears of David, who had been much charmed by the good sense and beauty of Abigail, he sent to her, and she consented to become his wife. He had previously married Ahinoam of Jezreel, after Saul had given Michal to another. Polygamy was not expressly forbidden by the law; neither did it receive any sanction therefrom. It was a matter of existing usage with which the law did not interfere; although it discouraged the formation, by the kings, of such extensive harems as the kings of the East have been wont to possess: and both David and his son Solomon had ample occasion to lament those besotting passions which led them to neglect this injunction, as

[Presents to a Bedouin Chief.]

well as to learn that there is in this matter an obvious social law which cannot with impunity be transgressed. This there will be other occasions to show.

Soon after this David removed to his former place of shelter, in the wilderness of Ziph. While he remained there, Saul justified the doubts which the son of Jesse, who well knew his character, entertained of the continuance of his good resolutions; for he again came to seek him at the head of 3000 men. But this only gave David another opportunity of evincing the true and generous loyalty of his own character. For one night, while the king lay asleep, in the midst of his men, with his spear stuck in the ground at his head, to mark the station of the chief, David entered his camp, attended by Abishai (brother to the subsequently celebrated Joab), and, without being noticed, penetrated to the very spot where the king lay. Abishai thought this a fine opportunity of ending all their troubles with the life of their persecutor; and begged David to permit him to transfix the sleeping king with his spear. But to the pious hero, "a divinely appointed king, although his enemy, was a sacred person. To lay violent hands on him, and to open a way to the throne by regicide was a crime which he justly abhorred. What God had promised him he was willing to wait for, till He who had promised should deliver it to him in the ordinary course of his providence."* He therefore checked the misdirected zeal of Abishai, and withdrew with him, taking away the spear which was planted at Saul's head, and the vessel of water which stood there for his use. David then went and stationed himself at the edge of an opposite cliff, overlooking the camp of Saul, and calling by name to Abner, the cousin and chief commander of the king, told him he was worthy of death for the careless manner in which he guarded the royal person. As he went on reproaching Abner, Saul, as he expected, recognised his voice, and guessing that he had again been spared when in his power, called out, "Is that thy voice, my son David?" and was answered, "It is my voice, my lord, O king!" David then proceeded with much energy, but in the most respectful language, to remonstrate against the treatment he received, and produced the evidence of the spear and water-jug, as evincing the value of the king's life in his eyes. The result was the same as it had been on a similar occasion before: Saul's heart was touched. He acknowledged that he had "acted foolishly, and erred exceedingly;" and after blessing David, returned to Gibeah.

David had before this formed the intention of again withdrawing to the Philistines; for in his remonstrance with Saul he had laid the responsibility of this measure upon his persecutors,—"If Jehovah hath stirred thee up against me, let him accept an offering; but if they be the children of men, accursed be they before Jehovah, for they now drive me out from abiding in the inheritance of Jehovah." He must not be allowed, however, thus easily to rid himself of the responsibility of so ill-advised and desperate an expedient, in which he neglected to ask counsel of God, but followed the impulse of his own apprehensions; and from the natural and obvious consequences of which he could only escape by acts of equivocation, hypocrisy, and ingratitude which do no honour to his name. However, we are to regard David, in all this portion of his life, as a learner, as one who was in the course of being trained to rule wisely, by various disciplines, distresses, and errors;—for even the errors of conduct into which men fall, by having placed themselves in a false position through too confident a reliance on their own judgment, are not among the least profitable experiences which they obtain, and which go towards the ripening of their minds. But, undoubtedly, it had been better for David, and more becoming, had he remained in his own country, relying upon the protection of that good providence by which he had hitherto been preserved.

On reaching Gath, with his 600 men, David was well received by the king, who appears to have been the same Achish in whose presence he had formerly played the madman. The Hebrew chief soon took occasion to request the Philistine king to assign him some town in which he might reside apart with his people; and the king, with generous and unsuspecting confidence, made over to him, to his full and exclusive possession, the small border town of Ziklag, which was situated not far from the brook Besor. Here he resided one year and four months, or until the death of Saul. From this place he undertook excursions against the

* Jahn, i. 103.

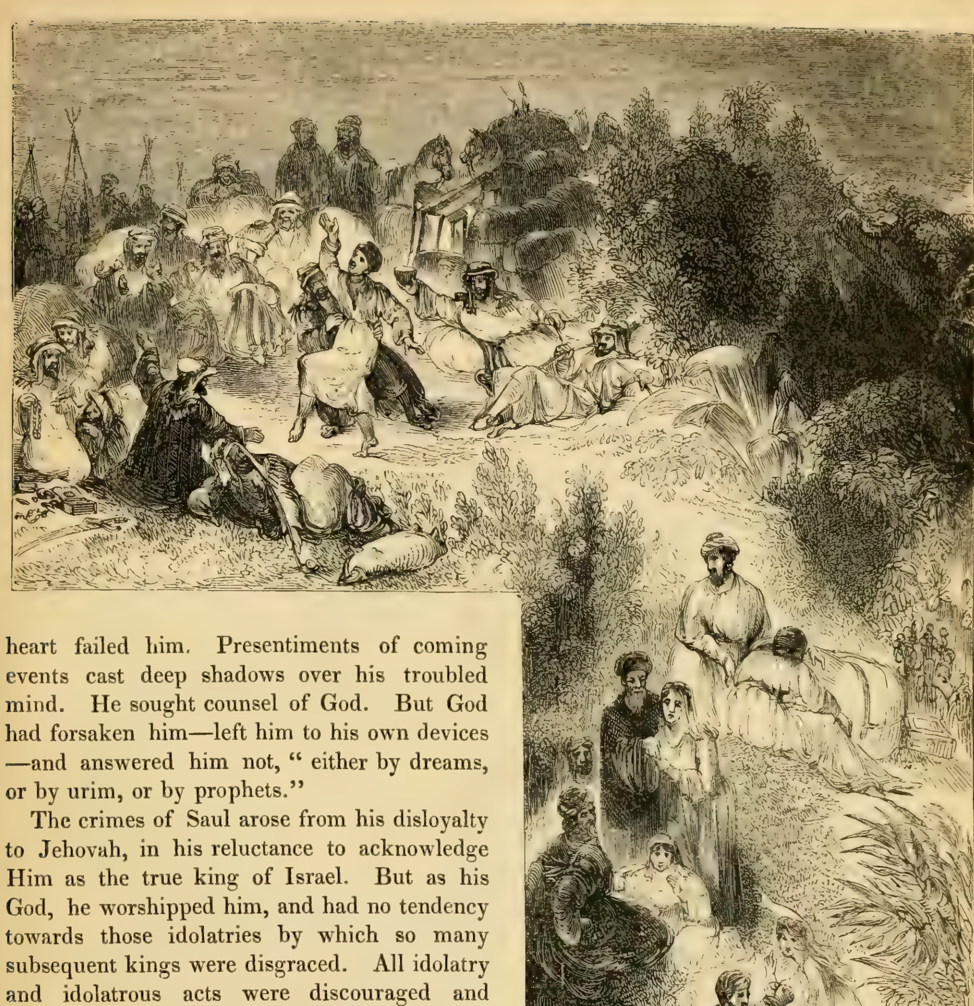
ancient predatory enemies of Israel, the Amalekites, the Geshurites, and the Gezrites, who roved about in Arabia Petræa, on the sea-coast as far as Pelusium, and on the southern frontier of the tribe of Judah. In all these excursions he utterly destroyed man, woman, and child, and took possession of the cattle and apparel, of which their wealth consisted. The exterminating character which he gave to this warfare, was to prevent the Philistines from learning that he had been acting against their allies and friends; and he always pretended to Achish that his expedition had been against the Israelites and their allies, by which he established himself firmly in the confidence of that king. For the cool manner in which the son of Jesse poured out innocent blood to cover a deliberate and designing falsehood, we have no excuse to offer. He must bear the blame for ever.

In those days the Philistine states joined their forces for war against Israel; and David, having, by his pretences, impressed upon Achish the conviction that he now detested his own people and was detested by them, was driven to the dreadful alternative of either taking the field with the Philistines and fighting against his brethren, or else of appearing ungrateful to Achish, and perhaps of occasioning the destruction of his family and himself. But from this difficulty he was extricated by the not unreasonable jealousy of the other Philistine princes, who expected he might turn against them in the battle in order to reconcile himself to his master. Achish was much hurt at such suspicions against one on whom he so perfectly relied, but was reluctantly obliged to dismiss him from the expedition.

On returning to Ziklag, David found the city pillaged and reduced to ashes. The Amalekites, Geshurites, and Gezrites, had taken the opportunity of his absence in another direction thus to avenge themselves for his former inroads upon them. They did not, however, retaliate to the full extent; for although " they took the men and women who were in it captive, they slew not any, either great or small, but carried them away." David's two wives were among the captives. His men were frantic at the loss of their families and substance, and at first talked of stoning their leader, whom they regarded as at least the remote cause of this calamity. But they were at last appeased, and set out in pursuit of the spoilers, notwithstanding the fatigue occasioned by their previous march. Two hundred of the men were unable to proceed farther than the brook Besor; and David, leaving them there, continued the pursuit with the remaining four hundred. On their way they fell in with a man half dead with illness, hunger, and thirst. Having refreshed him with food and drink, they learned that he was an Egyptian, a slave to one of the party they pursued; but that having fallen ill three days before, his master had left him—to live or die, as might happen—and that since then no bread or water had passed his lips. He gave an account of the operations of the horde; and, when pressed, agreed to conduct the Hebrew party to the spot at which he knew that they intended to repose. When that spot was reached, the nomades were enjoying themselves in full security, as they supposed themselves beyond the reach of pursuit, and could not know that David would have returned to Ziklag so soon. They were thus easily overthrown; and not only did the Hebrews re-capture all that they had taken, but gained besides so considerable a booty, that David was enabled to send presents to all the rulers in Judah who were favourable to his cause.

The 400 men who had continued the pursuit were unwilling to share the additional spoil with the 200 who had tarried by the brook Besor, although willing to restore their own property to them. But David took the opportunity of establishing the useful principle that all the persons engaged in an expedition should share equally, whatever part they took in it; or, in other words, that those whose presence protected the baggage should be equally benefited by a victory with those who went to the fight.

The present campaign of the Philistines against the Israelites was one of those large operations which nations can in general only undertake after long intervals of rest. There seems, indeed, during the reign of Saul, to have been always a sort of desultory and partial warfare between the two nations; but it had produced no measure comparable to this, which was intended to be decisive, and was calculated to tax to the utmost the resources of the belligerents. When Saul surveyed, from the heights of Gilboa, the formidable army which the Philistine had brought into the plain of Esdraelon—that great battle-field of nations—his



[Bedouins with Captives and Spoil.]

heart failed him. Presentiments of coming events cast deep shadows over his troubled mind. He sought counsel of God. But God had forsaken him—left him to his own devices—and answered him not, " either by dreams, or by urim, or by prophets."

The crimes of Saul arose from his disloyalty to Jehovah, in his reluctance to acknowledge Him as the true king of Israel. But as his God, he worshipped him, and had no tendency towards those idolatries by which so many subsequent kings were disgraced. All idolatry and idolatrous acts were discouraged and punished by him. In obedience to the law * he banished from the land all the diviners and wizards he could find. But now, in his dismay, he directed his attendants to find out a woman skilful in necromancy, that he might seek through her the information which the Lord refused to give. One was found at Endor, a town not far from the camp in Gilboa; and to her he repaired by night, disguised, with two attendants, and desired her to evoke the spirit of Samuel, that, in this dread emergency, he might ask counsel of him. Whatever might be the nature of the woman's art, and her design in undertaking to fulfil his wish,—whether she meant to impose on Saul by getting some accomplice to personate Samuel, who had only been dead two years, and whose person must have become well

* Deut. xviii. 10, 11.

known to the Israelites during his long administration,—or whether she expected a demoniacal spirit to give him an answer; it appears from a close examination of the text, that, to the great astonishment of the woman herself, and before she had time to utter any of her incantations, the spirit of Samuel was permitted to appear, in a glorified form, and ominously clad in that mantle in which was the rent that signified the rending of the kingdom from the family of Saul. When the figure appeared, the king *knew* that it was Samuel, and bowed himself to the ground before him. From that awful and passionless form he heard that the doom declared long since was *now* to be accomplished;—to-morrow Israel should be given up to the sword of the Philistines—to-morrow Saul and his sons should be numbered with the dead. At these heavy tidings, the king fell down as one dead, for he had touched no food that night or the preceding day, and was with difficulty restored to his senses and refreshed by the woman and his attendants.

The next day all that had been foretold was accomplished. Israel fled before the Philistine



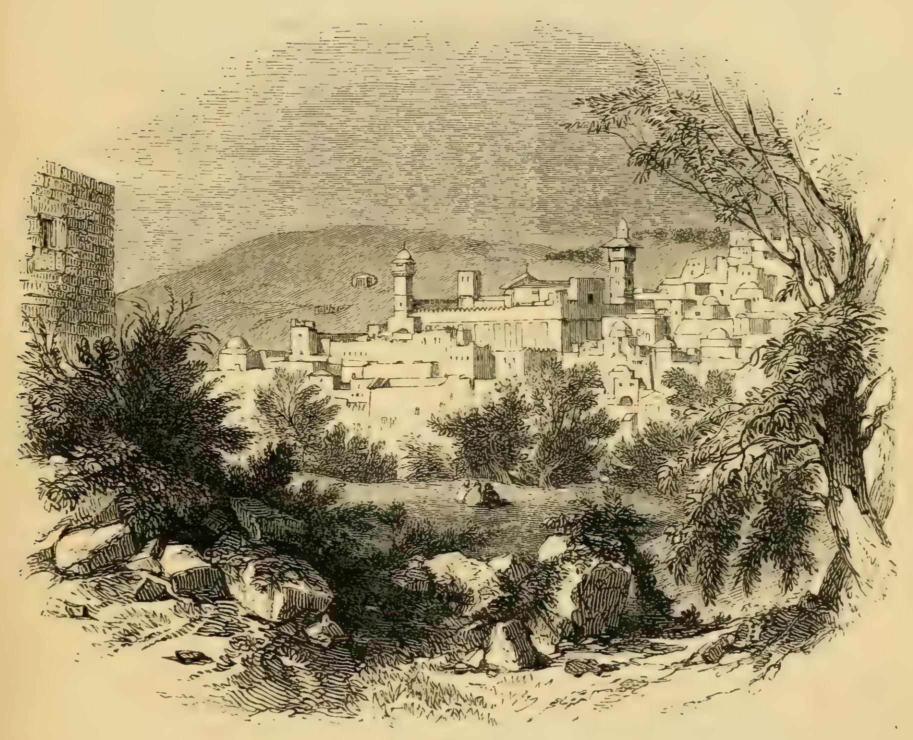
[Body of Archers.]

archers; and Saul and his sons, unable to stem the retreating torrent, fled also. The three sons of the king, Jonathan, Abinadab, and Melchi-shua, were slain. Saul himself was grievously wounded by the archers; and that he might not fall alive into the hands of the Philistines and be subjected to their insults, he desired his armour-bearer to strike him through with his sword; and when that faithful follower refused, he fell upon his own sword: and the example was followed by the armour-bearer, when he beheld his lord lying dead before him. " So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armour-bearer, and all his men, that same day together."

The next day, when the Philistines came to collect the spoils of the slain, they found the bodies of Saul and his three sons. The indignity with which they treated the remains of these brave men has no previous example. They cut off their heads, and hung their bodies to the wall of the town of Bethshan, near the Jordan. Their heads and armour they sent into Philistia, as trophies of their triumph, by the hand of the messengers who were despatched to publish it in their temples and their towns. The bodies of Saul and his sons were soon stolen away by night from the wall of Bethshan, by some valiant men of Jabesh, on the opposite side of the river, where a grateful remembrance was cherished of the king's first military exploit, whereby the people of that town were delivered from the loss of their liberty and their eyes. To preclude any attempt at the recovery and continued insult of the bodies, the people burnt them, and buried the collected bones and ashes under a tamarisk-tree.

CHAPTER II.

DAVID.



[Hebron.]

On the third day of David's return to Ziklag a man arrived in haste, with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head, and laid at the feet of David the crown and armlet (1) which Saul had worn. He told, truly, that Israel had fled before the Philistines, and that Saul and his sons were slain; but thinking to win royal rewards from the son of Jesse, he boasted that he had slain Saul with his own hand. The truth was probably that he had found the body of Saul in the night after the battle, and had taken from it the royal insignia which he brought to David. His expectations were grievously disappointed; for David, believing his statement, caused him to be put to death, as one who had not feared to slay the Lord's anointed. The man was an Amalekite. David mourned and fasted for the desolation of Israel, and he lamented the death of his beloved Jonathan, and even of Saul, in a most affecting and beautiful elegy, which we may here introduce as a specimen of the poetical compositions of one whose rank among the poets of the Hebrews is fully equal to that which he occupies among their kings:—*

* The version now given is that of Boothroyd, altered in some of the lines.

"O, antelope of Israel! pierced on thy high place!
How are the mighty fallen!
Tell it not in Gath;
Publish it not in the streets of Askelon;
Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,
Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.
Ye mountains of Gilboa, on you be no dew,
Nor rain, nor fields of first-fruits;
Since there hath been vilely cast away,
The shield of the mighty, the shield of Saul,
The armour of him anointed with oil.
From the blood of the slain,
From the fat of the mighty,
The bow of Jonathan was not held back,
Nor did the sword of Saul return in vain.
Saul and Jonathan!
In mutual love were they in life united,
And in their death they were not separated.
Swifter than eagles, stronger than lions were they!
Ye daughters of Israel weep over Saul,
Who clothed you pleasantly in scarlet,
And put golden ornaments upon your robes.
How are the mighty fallen in the midst of battle!
O Jonathan, slain on thy own mountains!
I am grieved for thee, O Jonathan, my brother!
Very dear to me wast thou:
Wonderful was thy love to me,
Surpassing the love of women.
How are the mighty fallen!
And the weapons of war perished!"

That he mourned even for Saul, will only be attributed to hypocrisy by those who are themselves incapable of such magnanimity, and are determined to forget that David, during the life of his persecutor, always respected him as a king appointed by God, and twice spared him when he had his life completely in his power.

With the approbation of the Lord, whom he consulted, David now removed, with his family and friends, to Hebron, where the rulers of the tribe of Judah, with views altogether theocratical, awarded the sceptre to him, as one whom God had already designated as king. David was at this time thirty years of age.

But no other tribe concurred with Judah in this important step. On the contrary, all the other tribes elected Saul's only surviving son, Eshbaal, as he was originally named,* but nicknamed Ishbosheth (*a man of shame*), from his weakness and incapacity, which, it would appear, saved his life, by precluding him from being present at the battle in which his brothers perished. This measure was probably promoted by that radical jealousy between the tribes of Judah and Ephraim, which prevented the latter (which took the lead among the other tribes) from concurring in the appointing a king of the rival tribe, or indeed from heartily sympathising in any measure which that tribe originated. But the prime agent in this schism was Abner, the commander of the army, who had drawn off the remnant of the defeated army to the other side the Jordan, and there, at Mahanaim, proclaimed Ishbosheth king. Abner was a bold and able, but unprincipled man; and doubtless expected to govern in the name of his feeble nephew. And he did so.

For two years no hostile acts between the two kingdoms took place. But war was at length provoked by Abner, who crossed the Jordan with the intention to subdue the tribe of Judah to the authority of Ishbosheth. David sent Joab to meet him; and the opposing forces met near the pool of Gibeon. But the men on each side felt that they were all Israelites, and were reluctant to fight against each other. The two generals, therefore, thought of a device which has often been employed in the East, and elsewhere, to excite tribes or nations to battle, when relationship or other causes made them reluctant or wanting in zeal. Twelve men on each side were matched to fight against each other between the two armies; and so well were they matched that they no sooner came within reach of one another, than each man seized his antagonist by the head and sheathed his sword in his body, so that they were all killed

* 1 Chron. xiii. 33, ix. 39.

upon the spot. This kindled the opposing forces, and a desperate and most sanguinary battle followed. It ended in the defeat of Abner, who was himself obliged to flee for his life. As he fled he was singled out by Joab's brother Asahel, " who was as swift of foot as any antelope of the field;" and he pursued him, without allowing himself to be drawn aside by other objects. He was close at the heels of Abner, when the latter looked back, and finding who it was, he became most anxious to avoid such a blood-feud as would arise between him and Joab, in case he slew his brother, even in his own defence. He therefore entreated Asahel to turn back that he might not be compelled to smite him to the ground. But finding that he was still pursued, and that it was impossible to outstrip his pursuer, he struck at him with the hinder point of his spear,* and with such force, that the weapon passed through him and came out behind. The pursuit of Abner and the other fugitives was continued by Joab and his other brother Abishai until sunset, by which time they were got as far as the hill of Ammah. Here the Benjamites (always valiant, and jealously attached to the house of Saul) rallied again under Abner, and posting themselves on the rising of the hill, stood prepared to make a stout defence;

[The Pursuer Slain.]

* The spear is armed at the lower end with a pointed iron, whereby it is stuck into the ground when the owner is in repose.

but their general, who was weary of fighting, called to Joab, and begged him to put a stop to the slaughter of his brethren, whose destruction could not but cause bitterness in the end. Although Joab had determined to continue the pursuit all night, he had the sense to hearken to his advice, and caused the trumpet to sound a retreat. After this, Abner and his men took the way to Mahanaim, and Joab returned to Hebron. Abner lost three hundred and sixty men in this action, while on David's side only nineteen were killed. The war having thus commenced, was continued for several years; but it appears to have been a small irritating warfare, which never came to any important or decisive engagement between the opposing parties. It was, however, attended with this result, that the cause of David was gathering strength every day, while the house of Saul daily became weaker and weaker. Indeed it seems to have required all the great talents of Abner to keep the kingdom of Ishbosheth together.

Meanwhile David reigned prosperously in Hebron. He increased the number of his wives to six, by all of whom sons were born to him in that place.* In this small kingdom his good and prosperous government, together with the knowledge that he had been divinely appointed to reign over all Israel, appears insensibly to have inclined the other tribes towards him, by which, more even than by war, his cause gathered that strength which that of Ishbosheth lost. Abner was fully sensible that without himself the kingdom of his nephew would fall to pieces, or rather pass quietly into the hands of David. He rated his services at their full value; and although we do not ourselves see cause to suspect, as some have done, that he contemplated taking the crown to himself, it is certain that he was not disposed to consider himself responsible to the king for his conduct, or to allow any of his proceedings to be questioned by him. Now Ishbosheth had heard that Abner carried on a criminal intercourse with one of Saul's concubines, named Rizpah: and as, according to the usages of the East, the concubines of a deceased sovereign became the property of the successor in so strong and peculiar a sense, that such an act as that imputed to Abner might be interpreted into a design upon the crown,† or at least was an insulting encroachment upon the peculiar rights of royalty, even the timid Ishbosheth was roused to question Abner on the subject. It is not very clear whether the charge was true or false; but it is clear that this overbearing personage was astonished and disgusted that the king should dare to question any part of his conduct. He rose into a towering passion:—" Am I, who, against Judah, have to this day shown kindness to the house of Saul, thy father, and to his brethren and to his friends, and have not delivered thee into the hands of David, such a dog's head that thou chargest me to day with a fault concerning this woman? God do so to Abner, and more also, if, as Jehovah hath sworn to David, I do not so to him, by transferring the dominion of the house of Saul, and to set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, from Dan even to Beersheba." From this it seems that even Abner knew that he had acted against a higher duty, in setting up Ishbosheth in opposition to David; but this cannot justify the grounds on which he *now* declared his intention to act against him. What he had said was no vain threat, although he was probably willing afterwards that the son of Saul should take it for an unmeaning outbreak of passion. He sent messengers to David to enter into a treaty with him, under which he would engage to use his great influence in bringing all Israel to acknowledge him as king; and after this he found a pretence for going himself unsuspectedly to Hebron to complete the agreement and arrange the steps to be taken. David had sent to Ishbosheth to desire him to restore to him his wife Michal, whom Saul had given to another. He had a perfect right to make this demand, if so inclined,—the rather as she had thus been disposed of against her own wish; but we may suppose that he was particularly induced to reclaim her at this juncture, in considera-

* For the purposes of the sequel it may be useful to note the names of these wives, and of the sons which they bore to David. 1. Ahinoam, of Jezreel, bore Amnon. 2. Abigail, the widow of Nabal, bore Chileab, otherwise Daniel. 3. Maachah, the daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur, bore Absalom and a daughter named Tamar. 4. Haggith bore Adonijah. 5. Abital bore Shephatiah. 6. Eglah bore Ithream. But as this enumeration is only for genealogical uses, it appears likely that the first-born son only of these several wives is named. It is improbable that they all had one son and none more. Some probably had daughters also; but Tamar only is named, as her history ultimately became of historical importance.

† See instances of this in the case of Absalom (2 Sam. xx. 23) and Adonijah, 1 Kings, ii. 13—25.

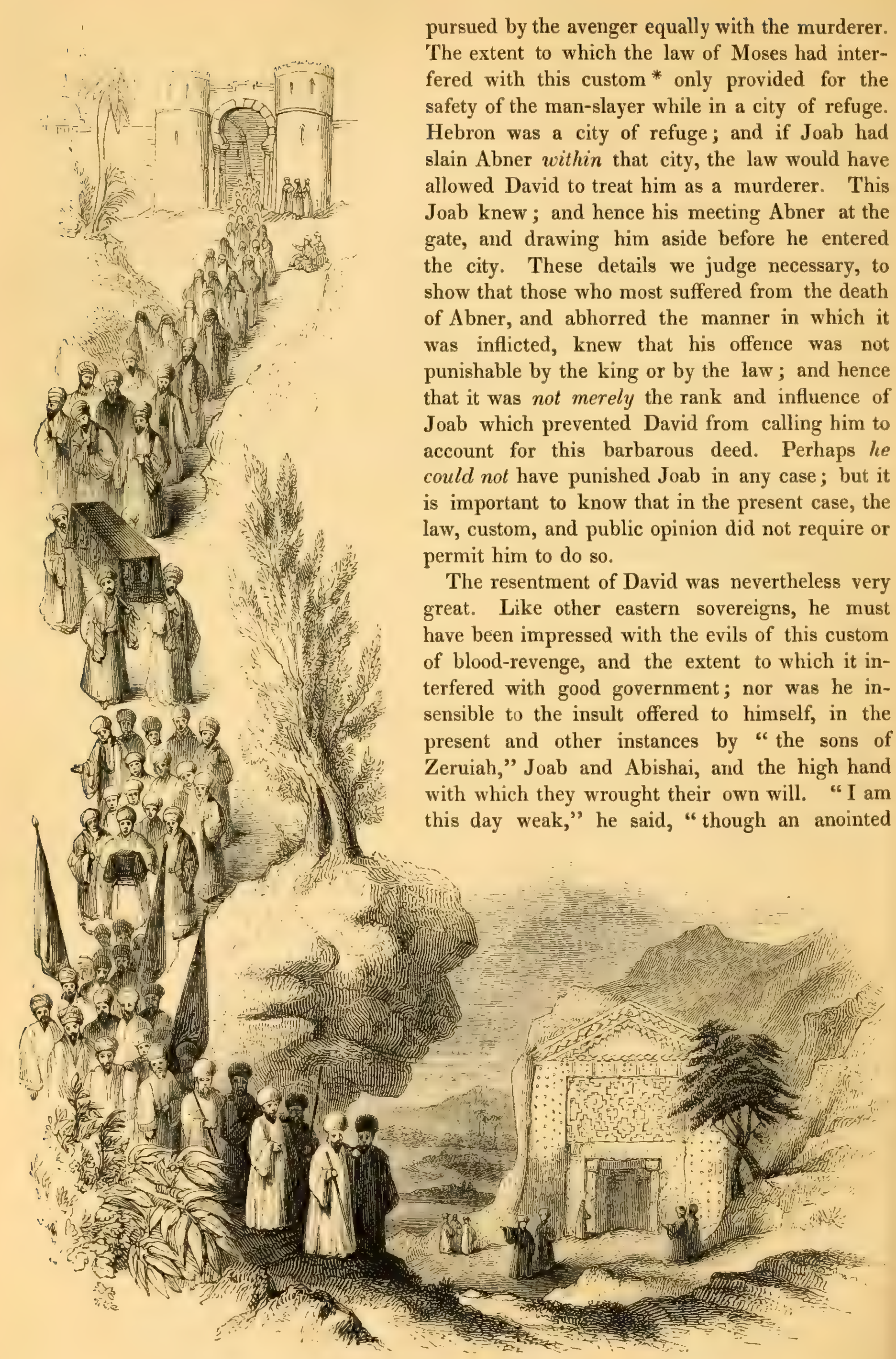
tion of the satisfaction the measure was likely to give to those attached to the family of Saul. As this claim was doubtless supported by Abner, it was granted; and having obtained an order to demand her from her present husband, that personage himself undertook to escort her to David. From this transaction it would seem that the war had latterly been allowed to die away, although without any concession or treaty having been made on either side. That he was escorting the daughter of Saul to David, proved to Abner a favourable opportunity, on his way, of explaining his present sentiments to the elders of the tribes through which he passed; especially to those of Benjamin, which was naturally the most attached to the house of Saul, while his own influence in it was the greatest. He dwelt strongly on the public benefits which might be expected from the government of one who had been expressly nominated by Jehovah to the kingdom; and such a representation, coming from such a quarter, coupled with the favourable dispositions towards David which had grown up during his reign in Hebron, was attended with such effect, that Abner was authorised to make overtures to him in behalf of the tribes which had hitherto adhered to the house of Saul.

Abner was received with great distinction and royally feasted by David; and after the business on which he really came had been settled to his satisfaction, he departed with the intention of inducing the tribes to concur in giving David a public invitation to take the crown of Israel.

Joab had been absent from Hebron during this visit of Abner; but he returned immediately after Abner had departed, and was deeply displeased when he learned what had occurred. Through the energy of his character, his abilities and experience in the affairs of peace and war, his influence and popularity with the army, which was under his command, and his unquestioned devotion to the interests of David, this man had great authority with the king. His standing, indeed, in the kingdom of Judah, had much resemblance to that of Abner in the other kingdom; nor were their characters altogether unlike. In the points of difference the advantage was on the side of Abner; for his experience in military and public affairs was larger, from which, together with his near relationship to Saul and his son, and the high stations he had occupied under them, his influence with the people was far greater than that which Joab or any other man in Israel could pretend to; and hence his greater power at this time of rendering essential services to the king of Judah. Abner and Joab also served very different masters; and thus it happened that while Abner was, in the public eye, the greatest man in the kingdom of Israel, Joab was in that of Judah only the greatest man next to David. Upon the whole, Abner was the only man in the country of whom Joab had cause to be afraid, and by whom it was likely that his own influence would be superseded in case the two kingdoms were united through his instrumentality. It was probably more from such considerations than any other that his displeasure at the intercourse between David and Abner arose. He went instantly to the king, and reproached him for allowing himself to be imposed upon by the able uncle of Ishbosheth, declaring his belief that the true object of his visit was to obtain such information concerning his state and resources as he might afterwards employ against him. He then went out and sent a messenger after Abner to call him back in the name of the king. As he returned, Joab took care to meet him near the gate, and drew him aside as if to speak to him privately, and while he was entirely unguarded and unsuspicious, gave him a treacherous stab, of which he instantly died. The history describes this as an act of blood-revenge for the death of his brother Asahel by the hand of Abner; and while allowing him the full benefit of this motive, it is hard to believe that envy and jealousy sharpened not the dagger of the avenger. It must be conceded, nevertheless, that the existence of a blood-feud between them extenuated if it did not justify the act of Joab in the eyes of all Israel. It was, in fact, according to the strict ideas of that barbarous institution, the imperative duty of Joab to shed the blood of Abner who had slain his brother; and that Abner himself knew that the death of Asahel would be attended with this result, is evinced by his anxiety to avoid the fatal necessity of slaying his pursuer; for if the man-slayer is known, the avenger is not bound to make any distinction as to the circumstances under which his relative is slain: and at the present day, the one who slays another in battle is

pursued by the avenger equally with the murderer. The extent to which the law of Moses had interfered with this custom * only provided for the safety of the man-slayer while in a city of refuge. Hebron was a city of refuge; and if Joab had slain Abner *within* that city, the law would have allowed David to treat him as a murderer. This Joab knew; and hence his meeting Abner at the gate, and drawing him aside before he entered the city. These details we judge necessary, to show that those who most suffered from the death of Abner, and abhorred the manner in which it was inflicted, knew that his offence was not punishable by the king or by the law; and hence that it was *not merely* the rank and influence of Joab which prevented David from calling him to account for this barbarous deed. Perhaps *he could not* have punished Joab in any case; but it is important to know that in the present case, the law, custom, and public opinion did not require or permit him to do so.

The resentment of David was nevertheless very great. Like other eastern sovereigns, he must have been impressed with the evils of this custom of blood-revenge, and the extent to which it interfered with good government; nor was he insensible to the insult offered to himself, in the present and other instances by "the sons of Zeruiah," Joab and Abishai, and the high hand with which they wrought their own will. "I am this day weak," he said, "though an anointed



[Funeral Procession.]

* See the chapter on the Law, p. 205.

king; and these men, the sons of Zeruiah, are too stubborn for me. Jehovah will reward the evil-doer according to his evil deeds." As it was of the highest importance to him that he should be clear of any suspicion of having had any part in the death of Abner, he publicly, "before Jehovah," declared himself guiltless of the blood which had been shed, and invoked the full burden of that blood on Joab and on his house. He ordered a public act of solemn mourning, in which he himself took a prominent part; and at the funeral he followed the body, as chief mourner, to the grave, where he stood weeping, and where he lamented, in elegiac verse, over the prince and great man, who had that day fallen in Israel.

This conduct of David tended still further to satisfy and conciliate the tribes attached to the house of Saul; and by them the murder of Abner was never imputed to him. Indeed, the event must, at the time, have seemed to himself and others anything but advantageous for his cause. But we, who have his whole history before us, can see that the manner in which he ultimately became king over all Israel, by the free and unsolicited choice of the tribes, was more honourable and safe to him, and more becoming his divine appointment than the same result brought about through the exertions of Abner, whose conduct, as between David and Ishbosheth, must have seemed very equivocal, and could, at the best, have been but "traitorously honest."*

When Ishbosheth heard of Abner's death, (without being aware of the plot in which he was engaged,) he felt that the right arm of his kingdom's strength was broken. Others felt this also: and the conviction that the son of Saul could not govern the troubled kingdom without Abner, grew stronger every day among the tribes, and directed their eyes to David as the only person under whom they could expect to realise the benefits the nation had expected to enjoy under a regal government. This feeling, this tendency of the nation towards David, was perceived, even in the court of Ishbosheth; and two of his officers, brothers, determined to anticipate the course which events were taking, by the assassination of their master, expecting by this act to deserve high rewards and honours from the king of Judah. Accordingly, they stole into his chamber, while, according to the universal custom of the East, he slept there during the mid-day heat. They pierced him as he slept, and then took off his head, with which they escaped unperceived, as at that time of the day most of the people were asleep. The murderers sped to Hebron, and laid the head of Saul's son at the feet of David, with the words, "Behold the head of Ishbosheth, the son of Saul, thine enemy, who sought thy life. Jehovah hath this day avenged my lord, the king, of Saul and of his seed." Astounding to them was the answer,—"As Jehovah liveth, who hath redeemed my soul out of every distress! if, when one told me saying, Behold, Saul is dead, thinking that he brought good tidings, I took hold of him and slew him at Ziklag, when he expected that I should have given him a reward for his tidings;—how much more when wicked men have slain a just person in his own house, upon his own bed, shall I not now require his blood from your hand, and destroy you from the earth?" And with these words he commanded his attendants to remove them to an ignominious death. The head of Ishbosheth he ordered to be deposited in the sepulchre of Abner.

The kingdom of Israel was now without even the appearance of a head, nor was there any remaining member of the family of Saul whom the most zealous adherents of that fallen house could dream of supporting in opposition to David. Saul had indeed left some sons by concubines, but they were living in obscurity, and even their existence was scarcely known to the people. Jonathan also had left one son, but he was a mere boy and lame. He was five years old when Saul and his sons perished in the battle of Gilboa, and he became lame from a fall which he received when his nurse fled with him, as soon as the tidings of that overthrow was brought to the house of Saul and Jonathan. His name was Mephibosheth.

David had reigned seven years and a half in Hebron, when, after the deaths of Abner and Ishbosheth, the crown of all Israel seemed to devolve upon him, as naturally as by an act of succession. It was probably the result of an unanimous decision in a great council of the eleven tribes, that those tribes sent an embassy to David in Hebron to invite him to assume

* Bishop Hall.

the general government of the nation. This they did on the grounds of, 1. his military claim, as one who had often led them to victory in the days of Saul; and, 2. of his theocratical claim, as one who had been expressly nominated by God to govern Israel. By this we see that the people were on this occasion careful to recognise the theocracy, since they rested their preference of him on his having been nominated to the kingdom by Jehovah, and having proved himself worthy of it during the reign of Saul. The studious avoidance of all notice of the seven years in which the tribes had been separately ruled seems to intimate a desire that this measure should be formally regarded as following the death of Saul. David intimated his readiness to receive the honour designed for him, and to accede to the conditions on which the crown was to be held. The rulers of the eleven tribes, therefore, at the head of large bodies of the best trained men in the several tribes, described as "men that could keep rank," who were chosen to represent the whole of their several tribes in the great national act of inauguration, repaired to Hebron to make David king. The number amounted to not less than 340,000, and the enumeration in the Book of Chronicles* is accompanied with several remarks, which the scantiness of our information concerning the *distinctive* character of the tribes makes interesting. It appears that many members of the tribe of Judah had adhered to the house of Saul, and abode within its dominions; for, on the present occasion, 6800 men of that tribe, armed with shield and spear, came with the others to submit to David. There were 7100 Simeonites of valour. The Levites sent 4600; and there were 3700 priests, headed by Jehoiada, the son of Benaiah; besides whom came Zadok at the head of twenty-two chiefs of his father's house. This Zadok, of the old pontifical line of Eleazer, is the same who was long after made sole high-priest by Solomon, to the final exclusion of the house of Eli; but, on the present occasion, he is particularly noticed as "a young man, mighty in valour," which shows —as indeed appears in the history—that the pursuits of the Levites, and even of the Aaronites, were not exclusively of an ecclesiastical and civil nature. From Benjamin came 3000 men; but the greater part of this tribe held back, still cherishing and lingering a futile attachment to the house of Saul, the rule of which had given to the tribe a flattering preeminence, which it was unwilling to relinquish. The half tribe of Manasseh on this side the Jordan sent 18,000 men; and the proud tribe of Ephraim testified its concurrence by sending 28,000. From Issachar came only 200 men; but these were the chief persons in the tribe, the whole of which was at their beck, and would have been in attendance if required. To them is given the marked character of being men of political prudence and sagacity, who knew better than most men how Israel ought to act under the present and other circumstances, and whose support was therefore of great value to David. From Zebulon came not fewer than 50,000 men, skilled in the use of all warlike weapons, and "not double-hearted," with respect to the object for which they came. Naphtali furnished 1000 captains, and with them 37,000 men, armed with shield and spear. Dan supplied 28,600 able warriors, and Asher 40,000. The tribes beyond Jordan, Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, sent, collectively, 120,000 warlike men. One obvious remark, arising from the survey of these numbers, is the comparative largeness of the proportions furnished by the *remoter* tribes, to the north and beyond Jordan. This is, perhaps, explained by the absence in those tribes of any pretensions for themselves, and of any strong attachment for the house of Saul, which could interfere with the heartiness of their recognition of the claims of David; together with the operation of the principles which gives to a prophet and great man the least degree of honour in and near his own home.†

* 1 Chron. xii. 23, *ad fin.*

† Of this Fuller seems to have given a satisfactory explanation. "How this comes to pass let others largely dispute. We may, in brief, conclude, it is partly because their cradles can be remembered, and those swaddling clothes once used about them, to strengthen them while infants, are afterwards abused against them, to disgrace them when men, and all the passages of their youth repeated to their disparagement; partly because all the faults of their family (which must be many in a numerous alliance) are charged on the prophet's account. Wherefore that prophet who comes at the first in his full growth from a far foreign place (not improving himself among them from a small spark, to a fire, to a flame, but, sun-like, arising in perfect lustre), gains the greatest reputation among the people. Because, in some respects, he is like Melchisedec, 'without father, without mother, without descent,' while the admiring vulgar, transported with his preaching, and ignorant of his extraction on earth, will charitably presume his pedigree from heaven, and his breeding as well as calling to be divine."

With this vast body, the flower of the Hebrew nation, and representing the whole of it, " David made a league before the Lord," which can be construed to have no other meaning than that which has already been indicated in the case of Saul, that he bound himself by oath to observe the conditions on which he received the sceptre, which are now unknown. He was then anointed king, and received the homage of his new subjects; and the whole was terminated by a feast to all the multitude assembled at Hebron, supplies for which were liberally sent in by all the neighbouring tribes, " on asses, on camels, on mules, and on oxen," and consisted of meat, meal, figs, raisins, wine, oil, oxen, and sheep, in great abundance. " For there was great joy in Israel."



[Jerusalem.]

The first act of David's reign was to undertake the reduction of the fortress of Jebus, on Mount Zion, which had remained in the hands of the natives ever since the days of Joshua, and which, as Josephus reports,* had been, from its situation and its fortifications, hitherto deemed impregnable. The Jebusites, therefore, ridiculed the attempt, and appear to have placed the lame and the blind on the walls, in derision, as fully sufficient to keep him out. But from the lower city, which was already in the possession of the Israelites, there was " a gutter," or subterraneous communication, with the fortress, by which David introduced a party of men and took " the strong-hold of Zion." In the operations of this siege, such ability and conduct was displayed by Joab, that he was appointed to the same chief command of the armies of Israel, which he had previously held in the separate kingdom of Judah. The fact that his rule was likely, under all circumstances, to find the most zealous supporters in his own tribe of Judah, probably disinclined him to remove from its borders; and he determined to make his new conquest the metropolis of his empire. A more centrical situation, with respect to all the tribes, would have placed him in the hands of the Ephraimites, whose

* Antiq. v. 2. Josh. xv. 63.

cordiality towards a Judahite king might well be suspected, and in whom little confidence could be placed in times of danger and difficulty. Similar considerations have dictated the choice of a very inconveniently situated capital to the reigning dynasty of Persia. But although better sites for a metropolitan city might have been found in the largest extent of Palestine, there were not better within the limits to which, for the reasons indicated, the choice of David was confined. That the site is overlooked from the Mount of Olives, although a great disadvantage in the eyes of modern military engineers, was of little consequence under the ancient systems of warfare, and could not countervail the peculiar advantages which it offered in being enclosed on three sides by a natural fosse of ravines and deep valleys, and terminating in an eminence, which, while strong in its defences from *without*, commanded the town *within*, and was capable of being strongly fortified. The united influence of all these considerations appear to have determined the preference of David for a site which was open to the serious objection, among others, of being so remote from the northern tribes as to render the legal obligation of resort to it three times every year, a more burdensome matter to them than it need have been had a more centrical situation been chosen.

It is supposed that David first gave the name of Jerusalem (*the possession of peace*) to the city, but this is not quite certain. On Mount Zion he fixed his residence, and erected a palace and other buildings, and it was on this account called "the city of David." This strong part of the whole metropolis ever after remained what may be called the royal quarter of the town.

The Philistines had good reason to dread the consequences of the consolidation of all the power of the Hebrew tribes in hands of such tried vigour as those of David, and they deemed it prudent to set upon him before he had time to establish himself firmly in his kingdom. Their measures were so well planned, and so secretly executed, that they appeared suddenly, in great force, in the heart of Judea, and took the king's native town of Bethlehem before he was able to make any resistance. Indeed the danger of his position was so urgent, that he was obliged to withdraw, for present safety, with some attached followers, to his old retreat in the cave of Adullam. It was here that he happened to express a longing desire for a drink of water from that well of his native town, at which the thirst of his younger days had often been assuaged. Hearing this, three of his most valiant and devoted men, Joab, Jashobeam and Eleazer, secretly departed, and, breaking through the host of the Philistines, which was encamped along the valley of Rephaim, brought him the precious fluid for which they had perilled their lives. But when the king received it, he would not drink, but poured it out as a libation to Jehovah.

Soon after this, David, encouraged by a favourable answer from God, fell upon the Philistines, and so effectually discomfitted them in two different onsets, that they were never after able to make head against him or any of his successors. Thus was one of the most irritating thorns in the side of Israel most effectually removed.

And now, when David had a respite from war, about the tenth year of his reign,* he thought of the ark of God, which had so long remained in the house of Abinadab, at Kirjath-jearim, and contemplated its removal to Jerusalem, that the place which had now become the capital of the human kingdom, might also become the capital of the invisible King. The design being received with approbation by the elders and chiefs of Israel whom he consulted, the king prepared for its execution, by despatching messengers throughout all Israel, to summon all the priests and Levites, and to invite as many of the people as were so disposed, to attend the solemnity. He also prepared a tabernacle† to receive the ark on its arrival. Accordingly, at the appointed time, the ark was removed from the house of Abinadab, upon a new cart, attended by David and his court, by a large body of priests and Levites, who sang and played on various instruments of music, and by a numerous concourse of people from all parts of the kingdom. On the irregularity of removing it on a cart, we have already had

* Counting from his first becoming king over Judah only.

† The old tabernacle, made in the wilderness, with the altar, and all the sacred utensils were, as it appears, at Gibeon; why David erected a new tabernacle, instead of removing the former, does not clearly appear; but it is probable that it was too large for the place within his new palace which, for the present, he intended it to occupy.

occasion to remark.* This irregularity gave occasion to an accident, attended with such fatal consequences as threw an effectual damp upon the joy of the solemnity: for the cart being at one place much shaken by the oxen, the officious Uzzah, the son or grandson of Abinadab, was struck dead upon the spot for putting forth his hand to stay the ark, none but the priests being warranted to touch it under pain of death.† This event struck David and the people with such consternation, that the intention of taking the ark to Jerusalem was relinquished, and it was left in the house of a Levite named Obed-edom, near which the circumstance occurred. But about three months after, hearing that the blessing of Jehovah had very evidently rested on the house in which the ark lay, the king hastened to complete his design. He perceived the former improprieties, and directed that the priests should now bear the ark upon their shoulders; and the whole solemnity was placed under the direction of Chenaniah, the chief of the Levites, who was found to be best acquainted with the proper observances. This was a great day in Israel. Nothing was omitted by which the occasion could be honoured. In the presence of that sacred symbol of the Divine King, David laid aside his royal mantle, and appeared in such a garb as the Levites wore, with and before whom he went, as one of them; and as they sang and played the triumphant song, which he had composed for the occasion, he accompanied them with his renowned harp, and danced to the joyful sounds it gave forth. Michal, the daughter of Saul, beheld this from a window, when the procession was approaching its destination; and she, imbued with some of the royal notions which had been fatal to her father and his house, despised him in heart for acting so far beneath what she conceived to be the dignity of the king of Israel. And when he came home, she could not refrain from allowing vent to this feeling: the reply of David was spirited and proper, declaring that it was before Jehovah, the true King of Israel, that he had laid aside the king, and made himself one with the people. And if this were to be vile, as she deemed, "I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight."

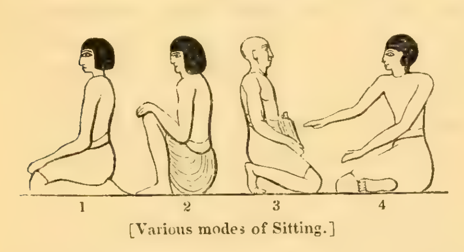
David now instituted a regular and orderly attendance upon the ark and its tabernacle. But the regular services of religion were still performed at Gibeon, where the old tabernacle and altar remained, and which was still therefore the place of concourse to the nation at their great festivals. Here the priests rendered their services, under Zadok. The solemn removal of the ark, and its dignified repose in the city of David, were well calculated to make an impression upon the multitudes, who were present on that occasion, and awaken their slumbering zeal for Jehovah. These favourable and becoming dispositions the king wished to confirm and strengthen; and for that end made suitable regulations in the services of the priests and Levites, and this especially by animating and instructive Psalms, which were composed, partly by himself, and partly by other gifted persons. They were sung not only by the Levites at all the sacrifices, but also by the people while on their way to the national altar, to attend the feasts. A very precious collection of these compositions has been preserved to our own day in the Book of Psalms, which has in all subsequent ages ministered much edification and comfort to a large portion of mankind. By such instructive means David, without coercive measures, brought the whole nation to forget their idols, and to worship Jehovah alone; and thus also their religion became honourable, even in the eyes of foreigners, and acceptable to many of them. The above is the first occasion on which Zadok is mentioned as high-priest. But after this, throughout the reign of David, he and Abiathar are often named separately or together, as *both* bearing that character—a singular innovation, resulting probably from circumstances over which the king had little controul. It seems likely that after Saul had slain the priests of Ithamar's line at Nob he restored the pontificate to the line of Eleazer, in the person of Zadok; while David and his people, during his wandering and his reign in Judah, had been accustomed to look to Abiathar, the escaped son of Ahimelech, as the high-priest; and that on his accession to the throne of Israel, he found the people so accustomed to regard Zadok as high-priest, that he thought it proper and prudent to recognise him in that character, without depriving Abiathar of the consideration he had previously enjoyed.

* See the Note at p. 427.

† Num. iv. 15.

If this explanation be correct, Zadok would have had this advantage over Abiathar, that he had actually discharged the regular functions of the high-priesthood at the tabernacle, which the other had never an opportunity of doing. It is probably on this account that wherever the two names occur together, that of Zadok is placed first.

About five years after this, and the fifteenth of David's reign, when the king had finished and inhabited his palace of cedar, " and God had given him rest from his enemies round about," he meditated a design of building a Temple to Jehovah, in place of the temporary tabernacle which he had provided. This design he mentioned to the prophet Nathan, to whom it seemed so obviously proper that he gave it much commendation and encouragement. But the night following, a message from God to David was delivered to him. This message declared it seemly that the Temple of God should be built by a man of peace; but his life had been spent in warfare, and he had shed much blood. He was therefore directed to leave the accomplishment of his plan to his son and successor, whose reign should be one of peace. Nevertheless, it was well for David that this intention had been formed; for the Lord to testify his approbation of this and other evidences of his zeal, and of his attachment to the principles of the theocracy, promised to make his name " as great as the names of the great ones who are on the earth;" and, far beyond this, the Lord promised "to build *him* a house," by establishing the succession in his house, and by granting to his posterity an eternal kingdom. The gratitude with which this promise was received by David seems to show he had some conception of its extensive import. He went, and seating himself most reverently on the ground,(²) before the ark, poured forth the strong expression of his gratitude. Now it is evident that under an express promise of this nature, all succeeding kings of the line of David were virtually chosen and appointed by Jehovah, according to the essential law of the government.



[Various modes of Sitting.]

As the Israelites were always victorious in war, while they were faithful to their God and to the principles of the theocracy, so now the arms of David prospered in whatever direction they were turned. Indeed it is scarcely, until his reign, that the national character of the Hebrews can be deemed to have recovered of the wounds which it had received in Egypt; and we find among them little military skill, and as little valour or fortitude. But from this time forward, trained to war and victory by David, they may be recognised as a truly courageous people, possessing among them as much military skill, science and discipline as any other nation of the same rank and age could claim.

The neighbouring and rival nations had soon cause to learn that a new king reigned in Israel. The time was come for the old enemies, who had so often inspired the Israelites with dread, to be afraid in their turn; and even the more distant foreign princes, whose assistance they procured, had cause to repent of provoking an enemy more puissant than themselves. It was now the turn of the Philistines to receive the yoke to which they had accustomed Israel. Attacked in their own country, and beaten on all hands, they were brought under tribute and subjection. The Moabites were more heavily dealt with: to secure his conquest, David thought it necessary to act with a severity not usual with him; for he put to death one half of those who were taken with arms in their hands: and although it was then, or had been not long previously, usual for the nations to put all the armed men to death, this deed strikes us as harsh, from comparison with the milder general character of David's own warfare, and can only be explained by reference to some peculiar circumstances with which we are unacquainted.

In the ancient promises to the Hebrews, the limit to which, in their palmy state, their victorious arms should extend, had been as clearly defined as the limit of their own proper territory. And the distinction here incidentally mentioned, between the limit of the *proper country* destined for their own occupation, and that of the *subject territory* which should be

acquired, is of considerable importance, and should not be overlooked or confounded as it often has been. The *limit of conquest* was fully reached by David.

Eastward this limit was to extend to the Euphrates. Of the kings who reigned in the intermediate country, one of the most powerful was Hadadezer, king of Zobah. This sovereign, whose dominion extended eastward to the Euphrates, was defeated by David in the first battle, and lost 20,000 infantry, 7000 horsemen, with their horses, and 1000 chariots of war. Of the chariots, the king of Israel preserved a hundred, with horses for them; but mindful that the law of the kingdom forbade the accumulation of horses, all the others were destroyed. The Syrians of Damascus, who were allies (perhaps tributaries) of Hadadezer, and came to his assistance, shared his fate. Hadad, their king, was vanquished, with the loss of 22,000 men, and David brought his territory under subjection to his sceptre. These two victories carried the eastern limit of his conquests to the Euphrates. Josephus adduces the testimony of a native historian, Nicolaus, of Damascus, in confirmation of the testimony which the Hebrew writers have left. From this it seems that the kingdom, of which Damascus was the capital, had grown very powerful under this Hadad, who might, indeed, be considered as its actual founder; but after various engagements with king David, was finally overthrown in a great battle near the Euphrates, in which he performed deeds worthy of his high name. Josephus himself, in conformity with the Scriptural account, relates that after David had reduced to his obedience Damascus and all Syria, having strong garrisons in every place where they seemed necessary, he returned in triumph to Jerusalem, where he consecrated to God the golden shields which had been borne by the royal guard of Hadadezer, from whose cities he also brought much spoil of brass for the service of the future temple.

While David was engaged in these victories, the southern frontier of his conquests was, according to ancient promises, extended southward to the Red Sea. This was the work of Joab's valiant brother, Abishai, who defeated the Edomites in "the Valley of Salt," at the southern extremity of the Dead Sea, and then carried his victorious arms into the mountains, the enclosed valleys, and the rocky wildernesses of Mount Seir, leaving garrisons to secure the advantages he had gained.

David was too well acquainted with the law, to attempt to incorporate any of these conquests as integral parts of the Hebrew territory. He appears in most cases to have left the internal government of the conquered states in the hands of the native princes, who were required to render annually a certain amount of tribute, consisting, for the most part, of such articles as their country afforded in the most abundance, or which they had the best means of procuring or producing. The delivery of such tribute from subject states, under the name of presents, was anciently, as it is now, an occasion of great pomp and ceremony, which, on another occasion, we shall more particularly notice. The obedience of the more distant conquests was secured by garrisons, which do not seem to have been judged necessary in those nearer countries which the mere vicinity of the conquering power might sufficiently controul.

Thus David literally became a "king of kings," and his fame extended into far countries. Some states which had been at hostilities with the states conquered by him sent splendid embassies, with valuable gifts, to congratulate him on his successes. Among these, Toi, the king of Hamah, upon the Orontes, who had been at war with Hadadezer, is particularly mentioned. He sent his own son Joram "to salute and bless" King David, and to deliver costly gifts, such as vessels and utensils of gold, silver, and fine brass. All the surplus wealth thus acquired from the states he conquered, or from those which sought his friendship and alliance, was treasured up by him for the great work which he had so much at heart, and which his son was destined to execute.

But of all David's foreign alliances, the earliest and most valuable was that with Hiram, king of Tyre. This had been formed very soon after David had taken Jerusalem and defeated the Philistines, and seems to have been sought by Hiram; for it will be remembered that David was famous in the closely neighbouring states before he became king; and no doubt not only his eminent public qualities, but his remarkable personal history, was familiar not less to the Phœnicians than to the Philistines. And although an enterprising commercial and

skilful manufacturing nation, like them, would be disposed to look down upon a people so inferior to themselves as the Hebrews in the finer and larger arts of social life,—military talents and success, and such heroic qualities as the character of David offered, have never yet failed to be appreciated, wherever found. Hiram "was ever a lover of David," and the offered alliance must have been the more gratifying to him as it came before "David acquired a name, and [before] his fame went out into all lands, and the Lord brought the fear of him upon all nations." This alliance was one of mutual advantage. Tyre possessed but a narrow strip of maritime territory, the produce of which, if sedulously cultivated, would have been very inadequate to the supply of its teeming population and numerous fleets. But besides this, the absorbing devotion of the Phœnicians to commerce and the arts rendered them averse to the slow pursuits of agriculture, the products of which they could so much more easily obtain by exchange against the products of their foreign traffic and their skill. To them therefore it was a most invaluable circumstance, that behind them lay a country in the hands of a people who had none of the advantages which were so much prized by themselves, but who had abundance of corn, wine, oil, and cattle to barter for them. An alliance cemented by such reciprocal benefits, and undisturbed by territorial designs or jealousies, was likely to be permanent; and we know that it tended much to advance the Hebrews in the arts which belong to civilised life, and to promote the external splendour of this and the ensuing reign. In the present instance Hiram supplied the architects and mechanics, as well as the timber (hewn in Lebanon), whereby David was enabled to build his palace of cedar, and to undertake the other works which united the upper and lower cities, and rendered Jerusalem a strong and comely metropolis.

In the midst of his success and glory, the memory of Jonathan was still very dear to David. He caused inquiry to be made whether any of his family remained, "to whom he might show kindness;" he then first heard of his lame son Mephibosheth, and caused him to be conducted to Jerusalem. The afflicted young man was received with great kindness by the king; who restored to him the lands which had belonged to Saul, for the support of his household, but desired that he would himself be a constant guest at the royal table, even as one of the king's own sons. This generous treatment, with the continued kindness which he afterwards received, won entirely the open heart of Jonathan's son. He became strongly attached to the person and interests of David, whose higher qualities he regarded with admiration and reverence.

It was probably in the period of peace and glory which followed the victories of David over all the enemies of Israel, that he employed himself in the organisation of the government. The very important part which he took in giving to all the departments of the government the form and character which he desired it to bear in future times, has, it seems to us, been rather overlooked and undervalued. For, in truth, David was the real founder of the Hebrew monarchy; and in that character his great abilities appear not less prominently than in the various other endowments by which he was so eminently distinguished from the mass of mankind. But his measures will more suitably engage our attention in the concluding portion of this chapter than in the present place, in which, however, it seemed desirable to point out the period to which his principal operations may with the greatest probability be referred.

During the days of his adversity, when persecuted by Saul, David had been treated by Nahash the king of Ammon with some kindness, of which he cherished a very grateful remembrance. When, therefore, he heard of his death, he sent an embassy to condole with the new king, Hanun, upon the loss of his father, and to congratulate him upon his peaceable succession. But this prince was led by his courtiers to regard the ambassadors as spies, and dared to give them such treatment as was then, and would be at this day in the East, regarded as the most ignominious which any men could receive. He caused their beards to be shaved, and their long garments to be cut short at their buttocks, and in this condition sent them away. When David heard of this grievous insult to him through his ambassadors, he was filled with indignation. He sent messengers to meet these personages, and to relieve them from the necessity of appearing at his court in their present degraded condition, by directing them to remain at Jericho until the renewed growth of their beards might enable them to appear without

shame. As the insult was too gross to be allowed to pass unpunished, David ordered Joab to march with an imposing force against the Ammonites. Meanwhile that people had not been idle; but fully aware of the probable effect of their ungenerous conduct, and not confiding in their own strength, they engaged the assistance of some of the neighbouring princes of Syria—in fact, "*hired*" them as mercenaries, being the first example of the kind which history offers. The force thus obtained from four Syrian princes amounted to 33,000 men, who came and encamped before Medeba in the land of Ammon. The force of the Ammonites themselves marched out of the town when the army of Israel appeared. Joab with his usual address hastened to prevent the junction of the two armies, and himself turned against the Syrians, while his brother Abishai kept the Ammonites in check. The Syrians were speedily put to flight by Joab; and when the Ammonites saw this, they also fled before Abishai, and hastened into the city.

In a second campaign, David himself marched against a powerful army composed not only of the Syrians, but of Assyrians from beyond the Euphrates, whose assistance had been procured by Hadadezer, who seems now to have determined on a last and grand effort to recover and secure his independence. This formidable army was under the command of Shobach, the general of Hadadezer, and were encamped at Helam, near the Euphrates, where David found them. In the terrible battle which ensued the Israelites were victorious; and that day they destroyed 700 chariots, 7000 horse, and 40,000 foot, being about half the force which the Syrians on both sides the river had been able to bring into the field. By this decisive victory the Syrian nations were completely subdued; and the Ammonites were henceforth left to their own resources.

The next campaign against that nation David left to the conduct of Joab, remaining himself at Jerusalem. Joab marched into the land of Ammon, and after ravaging the country, laid siege to the metropolitan city of Rabbah, or Rabbath-Ammon,(3) which for some time held out against him.



[Ruins of Ammon.]

There was little in this war to occasion much anxiety in the king, who remained quiet at

Jerusalem, where, in an evil and unguarded hour, his inordinate desires brought him very low, and entailed much anguish and sorrow on his future reign.

One afternoon the king arose from his mid-day sleep, and walked on the terraced roof of his palace,* from the commanding height of which he unhappily caught a view of a woman bathing. This was the beautiful Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite, who was then serving under Joab at the siege of Rabbah. The king sent for her, and she became with child by him. Afflicted at this event, which was so calculated, by betraying the adulterous connection, to bring upon the woman the ignominious death which the law demanded, if the husband should think proper to demand her punishment, David sent to desire Joab to send him to Jerusalem, as if with news of the war, hoping that his presence about this time would screen, or at least render doubtful, the effects of his own crime. But Uriah, either, as he professed, thinking the gratifications of home inconsistent with the obligations of his military service, or suspecting the fidelity of his wife, avoided her during his stay, and remained publicly among the king's attendants. Disappointed in this device by the proud honour or caution of Uriah, the king concluded that the life of Bathsheba and his own character could only be secured by his death. This therefore he contrived, in concert with the unprincipled Joab, in such a manner as to make him perish by the sword of the Ammonites, although this could not be effected without involving several other men in the slaughter. David concluded his complicated crime by sending back to Joab, through the messengers who brought this intelligence, a hypocritical message of condolence :—" Let not this trouble thee, *for the sword devoureth one as well as another.*" And then, to fill up the measure of his successful guilt, he openly took Bathsheba to wife, after the days of her mourning were expired ; and she bore him a son.

But the deed which David had done with so much privacy, thinking to escape human detection, " displeased Jehovah ; and He sent Nathan the prophet to reprove him." This he did with much tact, in a well known and very beautiful tale of oppression and distress,† so framed that the king did not at the first perceive its application to himself, and which worked so powerfully upon his feelings that his anger was kindled against the man, " who had no pity," and he declared not only that he should, as the law required, make a fourfold restitution ; but, with a severity beyond the law of the case, pronounced a sentence of death upon him. Instantly the prophet retorted, "*Thou* art the man !" In the name of the Lord, he authoritatively upbraided him with his ingratitude and transgression, and threatened him that *the sword* which he had privily employed to cut off Uriah should never depart from his own house, and that his own wives should be publicly dishonoured by his neighbour.

Convicted and confounded, David instantly confessed his guilt—" I have sinned against

* There have been many grave remarks and sermons upon the consequences of *idleness*, as exemplified in this instance, and so forth. Now there is no idleness in the case, or anything to blame David for, but the sin into which he fell. It is quite true that if he had not been at Jerusalem, and if he had not walked on the roof of his palace after sleep, this thing would not have happened to him ; but this is no more than the obvious truth that if a man were doing one thing, another thing would not have been done, which is as applicable to every human act as to that of David. *We are told that he ought not to have been at Jerusalem, but at the head of his army.* Now this is more than we know. It is, perhaps, rather creditable to David that he knew that a king had more important duties than to lead forth his armies in person on every occasion. He was doubtless ready, if there had been adequate occasion ; but the result proved that Joab was fully equal to the service on which he was engaged ; and the king could probably more easily find one to command the army than to conduct the civil government in his own absence, according to his own plans and designs. Those must have singular notions of an oriental monarchy who suppose that David had grown indolent because he remained in his metropolis : for there are few men whose *ordinary* home duties are more arduous and laborious than those of most eastern kings; and we know, from a subsequent event, that David actually undertook in his own person more labour than he was able adequately to sustain. Then, *as to his afternoon sleep and subsequent walk*,—the idleness of this has seemed unquestionable. But this is the ignorant inference of people who sleep outright by night for eight or nine hours, and then marvel to see others sleepful while they are wakeful, without considering that these others have slept but five hours at night, rose at daybreak, and have discharged half the duties of the day before they commence their own. In warm climates the cool morning hours are highly favourable to exertion, and therefore the orientals rise early to employ them; to compensate for which, and to obtain the total quantity of sleep which nature requires, they lie down again during the heat of the day, when, if they were awake, the relaxing warmth would make exertion difficult. Taken in all, the orientals do not sleep more, if as much, as we do; but they find it convenient and suitable to have two short sleeps instead of a single long one; and for this they do not deserve to be considered indolent. Joab doubtless slept as soundly in his camp this afternoon as David in his palace.

† " There were two men in one city ; the one rich, and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds : but the poor man had nothing but one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up ; and it grew up together with him and with his children ; and it ate of his own morsel, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him like a daughter. Now a traveller came to the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd to dress for the traveller that had come to him ; but took the poor man's lamb and dressed it for the man that had come to him."—2 Sam. xii. 2—4.

JEHOVAH !"—and for this speedy humiliation, without attempting to dissemble or cloak his guilt, the Lord was pleased to remit the sentence of death which he had pronounced on himself, and to transfer it to the fruit of his crime. The child died; and the Rabbins remark that three more of David's sons were cut off by violent deaths, thus completing as it were the fourfold retaliation for the murder of Uriah, which he had himself denounced.

"The fall of David is one of the most instructive and alarming recorded in that most faithful and impartial of all histories, the Holy Bible. And the transgression of one idle and unguarded moment pierced him through with many sorrows and embittered the remainder of his life, and gave occasion for the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme on account of this crying offence of "the man after God's own heart." When he only cut off the skirt of Saul's robe, *his heart smote him* for the indignity thus offered to his master; but when he treacherously cut off a faithful and gallant soldier, who was fighting his battles, after having defiled his bed, his heart smote him not, at least we read not of any compunction or remorse of conscience till Nathan was sent to reprove him. Then, indeed, his sorrow was extreme; and his Psalms, composed on this occasion, express in the most pathetic strains the anguish of a wounded spirit, and the bitterness of his penitence.* . . . . Still the rising again of David holds forth no encouragement to sinners who may wish to shelter themselves under his example, or flatter themselves with the hope of obtaining his forgiveness; for though his life was spared, yet God inflicted upon him those temporal punishments which the prophet had denounced. The remainder of his days were as disastrous as the beginning had been prosperous."†

These things happened about the eighteenth year of David's reign, and the forty-eighth of his age.

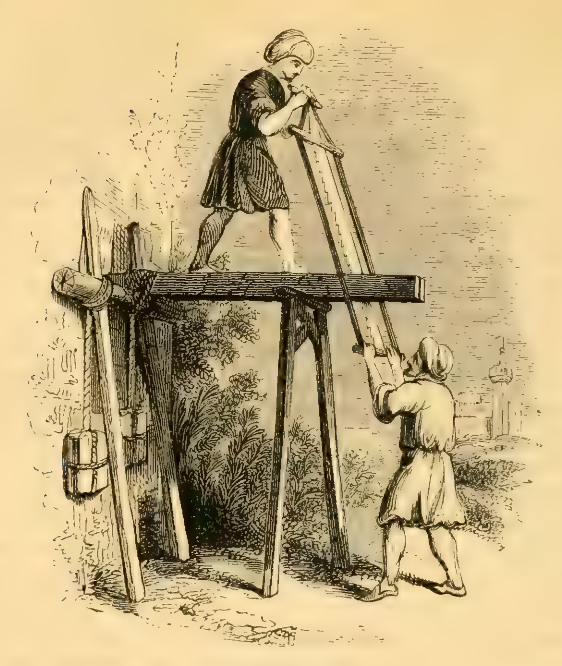
Soon after this, Joab, always zealous for the honour and credit of his master, though not himself an unambitious man, sent to acquaint David that he had taken the royal quarter of the city of Rabbah; and as this contained the sources from which the rest was supplied with water, it was not possible that it could much longer hold out. He therefore desired that the king would come with a suitable reinforcement and carry the town, that his might be the glory of bringing the war to a conclusion. David did so. The spoil taken in this metropolis was immense; and among it was the crown of the king, of gold set round with jewels, and worth a talent of gold, which may be reckoned at nearly 6000*l*. This was "set upon David's head;" but whether as appropriating it to his own future use as king of Israel, or as the act of a conqueror to denote the transference to himself of that sovereignty over Ammon which the native princes had hitherto enjoyed, is not quite evident. It is certain that such of this cruel and arrogant people as were taken in Rabbah, were treated with unusual severity—not, indeed, by their being put to torturing deaths, as the ambiguous terms of the text have suggested, but by their being reduced to personal servitude, and devoted to the most laborious employments which existed among the Hebrews, being such as those of sawing and cleaving wood, (see next page), of harrowing the ground, and of labouring in the brick-fields.

This was prosperity; as was, not long after, the birth of another son from Bathsheba. This son was SOLOMON, who, long before his birth, and long before his mother was known to David, had been pointed out, by name, as "the man of peace," who was to succeed him in the throne, and through whom his dynasty was to reign in Israel.

But the commencement of the evils threatened upon the house of David was not long withheld. Amnon, the eldest of his sons, conceived a violent passion for his half-sister, Tamar, the full sister of Absalom. By a feigned sickness he procured her presence in his house, and delayed not to declare to her his criminal desires; and finding that he could not persuade her to compliance, he by force effected her dishonour. Then passing suddenly from a criminal excess of love to an equal excess of hate, he expelled her ignominiously from his house. Tamar, in her grief, rent her virginal robe and threw dust upon her head, and sought the asylum of her brother Absalom's house; for, according to the ideas of the East, *the son of the same mother* is, more than even the father, the proper person to protect a female and to redress her wrongs.

* See Ps. xxxii., li., ciii.

† Hales, ii. 341—343.

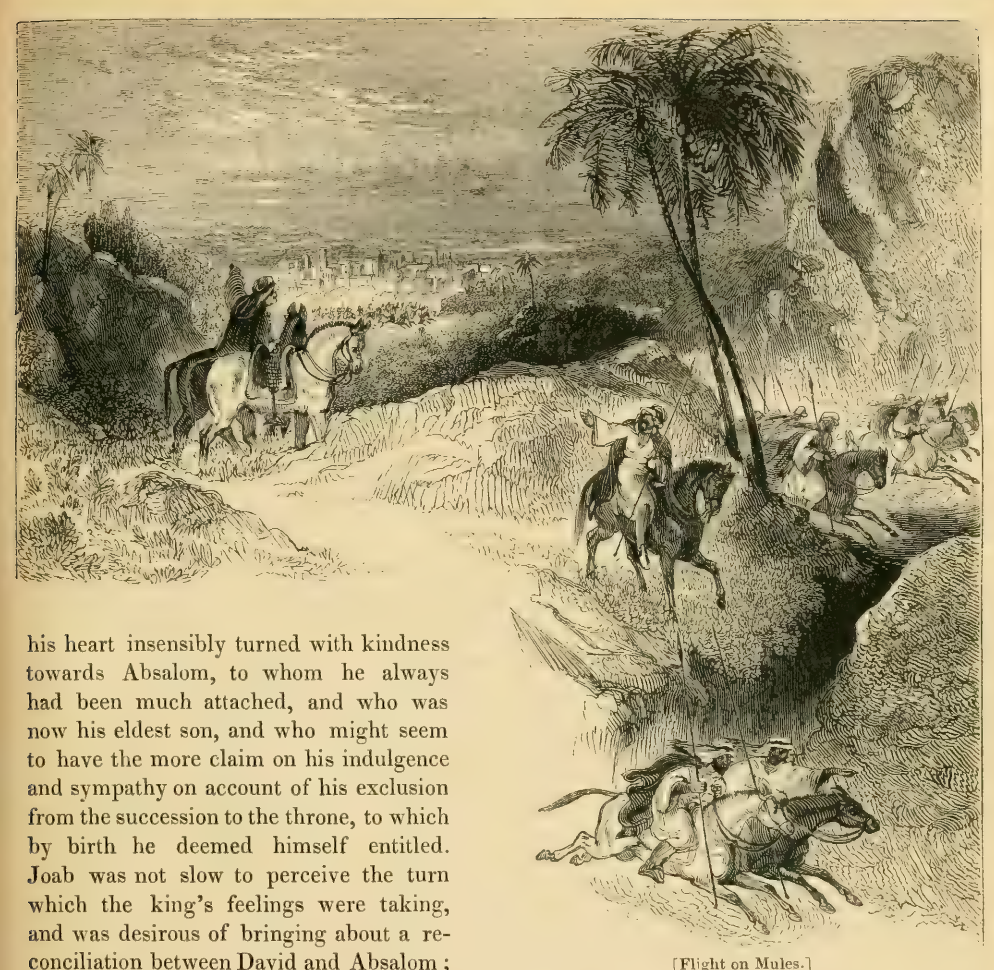


[Sawyers.]

No man could be more haughty and implacable than Absalom; but he was also deeply politic; and while he received the unhappy Tamar with tenderness, he desired her to conceal her grief, seeing that a brother was the cause of it, and to spend her remaining days in retirement in his house. He made no complaint on the subject, and young as he was, so well concealed his deep resentment, that even Amnon had not the least suspicion of it. When the news of this villanous fact came to the ears of David, it troubled him greatly; but being greatly attached to Amnon, as being his eldest son and probable successor in the throne, he neglected to call him to account or to punish him for his transgression. This, we may be sure, increased the resentment of Absalom, and perhaps laid the foundation of his subsequent alienation from, and dislike to, his father.

Absalom waited two years before he found an opportunity of giving effect to his long and deeply cherished purposes of vengeance. It seems that David allowed separate establishments to his sons very early. We find before that both Amnon and Absalom had separate houses, and now we learn that Absalom (and doubtless his brothers) had a distinct property to support his expenses. For at this time he was about to hold a grand sheep-shearing feast in Baal-hazor, to which he invited the king and all his sons. As Absalom had hoped, David declined, on the ground of the expense which his presence would occasion to his son; but all the princes went, and among them and the chief of them was the eldest, Amnon. Now Absalom felt that the day of his vengeance was come; and while he received his company with distinction, and royally entertained them, he gave secret orders to his servants to fall upon Amnon, and slay him, even at the table, on a given signal from himself. This was done. Amnon was slain while his heart was warmed with wine; on which the other princes, expecting perhaps the same fate, made all haste to get to their mules, and fled to Jerusalem. Their arrival relieved the king from the horror into which he had been plunged by a rumour that *all* his sons had been slain; but still his indignation and grief were very great. Absalom himself fled the country, and found refuge with his maternal grandfather, Talmai, the king of Geshur, with whom he remained for three years.

During this time the grief of David for the murder of Amnon was gradually assuaged, and



[Flight on Mules.]

his heart insensibly turned with kindness towards Absalom, to whom he always had been much attached, and who was now his eldest son, and who might seem to have the more claim on his indulgence and sympathy on account of his exclusion from the succession to the throne, to which by birth he deemed himself entitled. Joab was not slow to perceive the turn which the king's feelings were taking, and was desirous of bringing about a reconciliation between David and Absalom; but not daring to speak openly to the king himself, in the first instance, he engaged a shrewd woman of Tekoah to come before the king with a fictitious tale of distress, which, as in the case of Nathan's story, might be made instructively applicable to the circumstances. The woman played her part to admiration; but when she began to make her application, the king at once guessed that she had been prompted by Joab; and this being admitted by the woman, the king turned to that personage, who was present all the time, and, glad that what was secretly his own desire was thus made to appear a concession to the urgent request of that powerful servant, he said, "Behold, now, I grant this request; go, then, and bring back the young man Absalom." He accordingly came back to Jerusalem; but his father declined to see him on his return; and he remained two years in Jerusalem without appearing before the king.

At the end of that time Absalom was again, through the interference of Joab, admitted to the presence of his father, who embraced him and was reconciled to him.

It would seem that during his retirement, Absalom had formed those designs, for the ultimate execution of which he soon after began to prepare the way: this was no less than to deprive his father of his crown. As David was already old, Absalom would probably have been content to await his death, but for peculiar circumstances. If David properly discharged his duty, he must have led his sons to understand that although the succession to the throne had been assured to his family, the ordinary rules of succession were not to be considered

obligatory or binding, inasmuch as the Supreme King possessed and would exercise the right of appointing the particular person who might be acceptable to him. In the absence of any contrary intimation, the ordinary rules might be observed ; but, according to the principles of the theocratical government, no such rules could be of force when a special appointment intervened. It was already known to David, and could not but be known or suspected by Absalom, that not only he but some other of the king's sons were to be passed over by such an appointment, in favour of Solomon, to whom, by this time, the king probably began to pay attention as his successor. The fact that even the ordinary law of primogeniture as applied to the government, had not yet been exemplified among the Hebrews, must have tended to increase Absalom's uncertainty of his own succession to his father. Besides, in contending for the crown while his father lived, he had but one competitor, and that one fondly attached to him ; whereas if he waited until his father's death, he might have many vigorous competitors in his brothers. These, or some of them, were probably the considerations in which the designs of Absalom originated. But these designs were not merely culpable as against his own father, but as an act of rebellion against the ordinations of the theocracy, since they involved an attempt to appropriate by force that which God had otherwise destinated, or which at least was to be left for his free appointment. The ultimate success of Absalom would therefore have utterly subverted the theocratical principle which still remained in the constitution of the Hebrew state.

At the first view, such an enterprise, as against such a man as David, and by his own son, must have seemed wild and hopeless. But in the contest between youth and age,—between novelty and habit,—between the dignity and authority of an old king, and the ease and freedom of one who has *only* popularity to seek,—the advantages are not all in favour of the old governor. Besides, it seems that there was much latent discontent among the people, arising in a considerable degree from that very confidence in the justice and wisdom of the king by which his throne ought to have been secured. It is the duty of an Oriental king to administer justice in his own person, and that duty is not seldom among the heaviest of those which devolve upon him. This grew in time to be so sensibly felt, that ultimately among the Hebrews, as in some Oriental and more European states, the king only undertook to attend to appeals from the ordinary tribunals. But under the former state of things, the people will rather bring their causes before a just and popular king than to the ordinary judges; and he in consequence is so overwhelmed with judicial business, that there remain only two alternatives —either to give up all his time to these matters, to the neglect of the general affairs of the nation; or else to risk his popularity by fixing a certain time every day for the hearing of causes, whereby some of the suitors must often wait many days before their causes can be brought under his notice. This hindrance to bringing a case immediately before the king is calculated to relieve him by inducing the people to resort to the inferior judges from whom prompt justice might be obtained ; but on the other hand, it is well calculated to endanger his popularity with the unthinking multitude, who deem their own affairs of the highest importance, and attribute to his neglect or indolence the delay and difficulty which they experience. David made choice of the latter alternative, and suffered the inevitable consequences.

Absalom was not slow to perceive the advantage this was to him, or to neglect the use which might be made of it. He had other advantages : he was an exceedingly fine young man, admired by all Israel for his beauty, and particularly celebrated for the richness and luxuriance of his hair. This was no small matter among a people so open as were the Hebrews to receive impressions from the beauty, or tallness, or strength of their public men. It was also probably a great advantage to Absalom, as against David, and which would have availed him against any of his brothers, had any of them been older than himself, that he was maternally descended from a race of kings. When even in our own day, we see the conventional rights of primogeniture, set aside, in the East, in favour of the son of a nobly descended mother,*

* In Persia, Abbas Meerza, the father of the present king, was, on account of the noble descent of his mother, nominated by his father to succeed him in the throne, in preference to an elder son whose mother was a merchant's daughter.

we cannot suppose this consideration without weight among the Israelites in the time of David.

Soon after the reconciliation with his father, Absalom began to live with great ostentation; taking upon him much more state than his station as the eldest son of the crown required, and more probably than his father exhibited as king. He had chariots, and a guard of horsemen, and never appeared in public but attended by fifty men. This, by contrast, the more enhanced the condescension and affability which his purposes required him to exemplify. It was his wont to make his appearance very early in the morning, in the way that led to the palace-gate; and when any man who had a law-suit came to the king for judgment, Absalom would call to him and inquire with much apparent interest from what town he came, and the nature of his suit before the king; he would then condole with him on the state of affairs which made it so difficult to obtain redress and justice, and would wind up with the passionate exclamation, "Oh that *I* were made judge in the land, that every man who hath any suit or cause, might come unto *me*, and *I* would do him justice!" And then when any man passing by, came to make his obeisance to the king's son, Absalom would put forth his arms, and take hold of him, and embrace him like a brother. "And after this manner," says the narrative, "did Absalom to all Israel who came to the king for judgment: *thus Absalom stole away the hearts of the men of Israel.*" And it is important to note that the men whose hearts he thus "stole away," were inhabitants of all the different parts of the land, who would afterwards carry to their several homes the impressions they had received.

At last, four years after his reconciliation to his father, Absalom judged his plans ripe for execution; he therefore obtained the king's permission to go to Hebron, under the pretence of offering there a sacrifice which he had vowed during his residence at Geshur. At this place he had appointed the chiefs of his party to meet him, while others, who were dispersed through all the tribes, were ordered to proclaim him king, as soon as they heard the signal given by the sound of the trumpet. At his arrival in Hebron, he sent for Ahithophel* who readily came; and the defection of that great politician, who had been the chief of David's councillors, and whose reputation for wisdom was so great, that his opinion on most subjects was respected as that of an oracle, gave much strength to the cause of Absalom, and attracted to Hebron numbers of influential men from all quarters of the land.

Alarmed at this formidable rebellion so close to him, David hastily took flight with his family and servants, leaving ten of his concubine-wives in charge of the palace. He paused outside the town to survey the faithful few who were prepared to follow his fortunes. Among them were the high-priests, Zadok and Abiathar, with the priests and Levites bearing the ark. These David directed to return with the ark into the city: "If I shall find favour in the eyes of Jehovah, he will bring me back, and show me both it and his habitation. But if he thus say, 'I have no delight in thee,' behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him." From this and other expressions, similarly humbled and resigned to the dispensations of providence, it appears that he recognised in this unnatural conspiracy against him a portion of the judgments which the prophet had been authorised to denounce against him for his iniquities in the matter of Uriah and Bathsheba. David also pointed out to the high-priests that they might render him much service by remaining in the city, from which they might secretly transmit intelligence and advice to him through their sons, Ahimaaz and Jonathan.

The whole of the two corps of body-guards (the Cherethites and Pelethites), as well as the 600 Gathites, were ready to attend the king. The last-named body appear to have been native Philistines of Gath, whom David had attached to his service after the conquest of their country, and who had perhaps become proselytes.†

* The Jews suppose that Ahithophel was the grandfather of Bathsheba; and that he had been alienated from David by his conduct towards her, and by the murder of her husband. But this is doubtful.

† Some, however, think it was a band of native Israelites called Gathites in memory of the 600 men who composed the band of followers who accompanied him when he sought refuge, the second time, in Gath, and in which indeed the members of that body had been incorporated, and were replaced as they died off. But there is no good reason why *such* a body should be named from Gath rather than from other places or circumstance in which their history connected them with David. Besides, he obviously speaks to Ittai, their leader, as to a foreigner, who, with "his brethren," could hardly be expected to incur distress for his sake.

The king attempted to dissuade Ittai, their leader, from attending him with his men, apparently feeling that, as foreigners and mercenaries, they might be rather expected to attach themselves to the rising fortunes of Absalom. But the answer of Ittai was decisive: "As Jehovah liveth, and as my lord the king liveth, surely in what place my lord shall be, whether in death or life, there also will thy servant be."

Having taken this melancholy review of his followers, the king went on, "by the ascent of Mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, barefoot, and with his head covered; and all the people that were with him covered every man his head, weeping as they went up," in token of extreme sorrow and humiliation. They had scarcely reached the summit before David was joined by an old and attached friend named Hushai, who had been one of his council, and who came with his clothes rent and dust upon his head, resolved to share in the misfortunes of his king. But David, well convinced of his attachment, did not think it fit to take him with his train; but rather begged him to go and join himself to Absalom, where he might render much better service by thwarting the counsels of Ahithophel (of whose defection he had just heard), and by conveying to him, through the two high-priests, information of whatever resolutions the revolters might take. Hushai readily accepted this office, and acquitted himself in it with such consummate tact and zeal, as not a little contributed to the final overthrow of Absalom and his party.

In his further progress David was joined by Ziba, the steward of Mephibosheth, who brought with him some necessary refreshments, and falsely and treacherously reported that his master remained behind, in the expectation that the turn which affairs were taking might result in the restoration of the house of Saul in his person. David, sensibly hurt at this treatment from one who owed so much to his kindness and gratitude, hastily told Ziba henceforth to regard as his own property the lands he had hitherto managed for Mephibosheth. Immediately after, an incident occurred to confirm the impression he had thus received; for near Bahurim, a village not far on the eastern side of Olivet, he was encountered by one of Saul's family, named Shimei, who dared to throw at him and his people vollies of stones, accompanied by the grossest abuse and bitterest imprecations against David as the author of all the wrongs and misfortunes of the house of Saul, which he said were now in the course of being avenged. All this unexpected insult David bore with meekness and patience; for when Abishai desired permission to punish the man on the spot, the king refused; "Behold," he said, "my son, that came forth out of mine own bowels, seeketh my life, how much more now this Benjamite? Let him alone, and let him curse; for Jehovah hath bidden him. It may be that Jehovah will look upon my affliction, and requite me good for his cursing this day."

Absalom delayed not to march to Jerusalem. He was surprised and gratified to find there Hushai, the old friend of his father, and gave him a place in his council. In that council the voice of Ahithophel was still paramount and decisive. Perceiving that many held back or wavered from the apprehension that Absalom would hardly go to the last extremities against his father, and that possibly they might become the victims of another reconciliation between David and his son, this wily and unprincipled statesman advised that Absalom should not delay to remove this apprehension by such an act as would, in the sight of all the people, commit him beyond all hope of a pardon or reconciliation to the bad cause in which he was engaged. This was that he should rear a pavilion on the top of the palace (to render it conspicuous from afar), into which he should, "in the sight of all Israel," enter to the concubine-wives whom David had left in charge of the palace. This atrocious council was followed by Absalom, who thus unintentionally accomplished Nathan's prophecy.

The next advice of Ahithophel was that not a moment should be lost in crowning the success of the rebellion by the death of the king, without allowing him time to bring his resources into action. To this end he offered himself to pursue him at the head of 12,000 men; "And I shall come upon him while he is weary and weak-handed, and terrify him; and while all the people who are with him flee, I will smite the king only. And I will bring back all the people unto thee, as a bride is brought to her husband (for only one man's life thou seekest); and the whole people shall have peace." This really sagacious advice was much approved

by Absalom, who perhaps considered that the guilt would rest upon Ahithophel; and to the other counsellors it also seemed good. Hushai was absent: and as a high opinion of his prudence was entertained, Absalom sent for him, and then told him what Ahithophel had advised, and asked whether he thought that advice good. Hushai at once saw that David was lost, if this plan were not frustrated. He, therefore, with great presence of mind, adduced several specious arguments against it, and in favour of delay; dwelling upon the known valour of David and his friends, and the serious consequence of any check or failure in the first attack. The least repulse at such a juncture might be fatal to the cause of Absalom. The awe in which they all stood of the military talents and courage of the old king gave such effect to these suggestions, that the counsel of Hushai was preferred to that of Ahithophel. Of all this Hushai apprised the high-priests, and desired them to convey the information to David through their sons, together with his advice that not a moment should be lost in passing to the country beyond Jordan. This message was conveyed to David with some danger and difficulty by Jonathan and Ahimaaz, who had remained in concealment at Ain Rogel, outside the city. Neither the information nor advice were lost upon the king, who instantly marched to the Jordan, and passed over with all his people, so that by the morning light not one was left in the plain of Jericho.

The far-seeing Ahithophel deemed the cause of Absalom to be lost, when he knew that the counsel of Hushai was to be followed. His pride also could little brook the neglect the advice which he had given, and which he had been used to see so reverently regarded. On both accounts, he abandoned the cause. He went to his own home; and while he was still wise enough to set his affairs in order, was mad enough to hang himself.

David established himself at the town of Mahanaim, which, it will be remembered, had been the royal seat of Ishbosheth, and which appears to have been chosen by him, and now by David, on account of the strength of its fortifications. To that place several principal persons of the country, who were well affected to the cause of David, brought a timely supply of provisions for himself and his men, together with tents, beds, and other necessary utensils. An aged person of Gilead, named Barzillai, particularly distinguished himself by his liberality on this occasion to the exiled king.

When Absalom heard that his father was at Mahanaim, he crossed the Jordan with an army, and encamped in the land of Gilead. His army was under the command of Amasa, his cousin.*

David, on his part, reviewed his force, which was but a handful of men as compared with the large host which Absalom brought into the field. He divided it into three battalions, the command of which he gave to Joab, Abishai, and Ittai the Gathite, intending himself to command the whole in person. But his people, aware that his valued life was principally sought, would not hear of it, but insisted on his remaining behind at Mahanaim, with a small reserved force. As the rest of his adherents marched out at the gate, David, who stood there, failed not to charge the commanders, in the hearing of the men, for his sake to respect the life of Absalom.

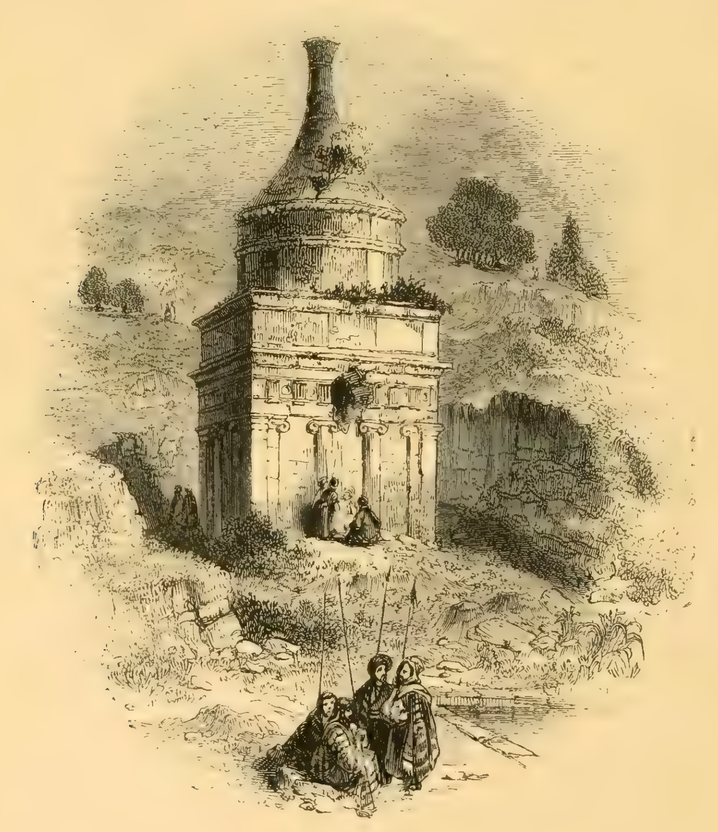
A most sanguinary action was soon after fought in the forest of Ephraim, wherein the rebel army was defeated, with the loss of 20,000 men, slain in the battle-field, besides a great number of others who perished in the wood and in their flight. Absalom himself, mounted upon a mule,† was obliged to flee from a party of David's men towards the wood, where the boughs of a thick oak having taken hold of his bushy hair, in which he took so much pride, the mule continuing its speed, left him suspended in the air. The pursuing soldiers, seeing him in this state, respected the order of the king, and forbore to smite him; but Joab, who happened to learn what had occurred, ran and struck three darts through his body. "Whatever were Joab's crimes, among them disloyalty was not to be reckoned. And now he gave the most unequivocal proof of his unshaken fidelity, in knowingly incurring the king's dis-

* Zeruiah, the mother of Joab and Abishai, was a sister of David; Abigail, the mother of Amasa, was another sister. Whence Joab, Abishai and Amasa, were all nephews of David, and cousins of Absalom: whence also it happened that commanders of the opposite armies were sisters' sons. See 1 Chron. ii. 16, 17. But 2 Sam. xvii. 25, makes Abigail the *grand*mother of Amasa.

† As he had for civil state plenty of horses and chariots, this shows that the Hebrews had not yet come to use either in war.

pleasure, to rid him of an obstinate rebel against his own father, whom no forgivenesses could soften and no favours could bind, for whom Joab himself had so successfully interceded, and was likely therefore to have been otherwise well disposed towards Absalom from the mere circumstance of having served him."*

As the death of Absalom ended the cause of war, Joab caused the trumpet to sound a retreat, to stop the carnage. The body of Absalom was taken down, and cast into a large pit, and covered with a heap of stones. This was not the end or the sepulchre expected by this ambitious man, when he reared for himself a fair monument " in the king's dale," supposed the Valley of Jehoshaphat, to keep his name in remembrance, because he had no sons, and therefore called it by his own name. In what manner we may venture to connect with Absalom the monument which now appears in the Valley of Jehoshaphat bearing his name, is a matter on which a few words may be said in a note to this chapter. Meanwhile, a representation of it is here introduced.



[Absalom's Sepulchre.]

The partisans of Absalom were no sooner acquainted with the death of their popular chief than they fled, every man to his own home.

Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok the high-priest, besought Joab to be allowed to bear the tidings of the victory to the king. But as Joab knew that David would regard as evil any tidings that included the death of his son, he, out of regard to Ahimaaz, refused his permission, but sent Cushi with the news. The other, afterwards persisting in his request, was allowed to go also; and he went with such speed that he outran Cushi, and was the first to appear before the

* Hales, ii. 349.

king, who sat at the gate of Mahanaim, anxiously awaiting tidings from the battle. The king and the father had struggled hard within him; the father conquered; and now his absorbing



[Race of Messengers.]

desire was to know that Absalom was safe. Aware of this feeling, Ahimaaz contented himself with reporting the victory, leaving to Cushi the less pleasant news; and he, when plainly asked, " Is the young man Absalom safe?" answered, with much discretion, " The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do thee evil, be as that young man is." On hearing this, " the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate; and as he went, thus he said, ' O my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom! would to God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!' " And thus he remained in the chamber over the gate, with his head covered like a mourner, wailing for his son, and oblivious to all things else.

His faithful adherents, who, by venturing their lives for him against fearful odds, had that day restored him to his throne, returning weary to the city, where they deserved to be greeted with thanks and praises, and triumphal songs, were quite confounded to learn this conduct of the king, and slunk into the town like guilty people—even like defeated men rather than conquerors. As very serious consequences might arise from this state of feeling, Joab went in to the king, and reproved him very sharply for his unkingly conduct and untimely wailing, so calculated to discourage his truest friends, and insisted that he should go forth and show himself to the people, and speak kindly to them; " For," said he, " if thou go not forth, not a man will remain with thee this night; and this will be worse to thee than any evil that hath befallen thee from thy youth until now." The king could see the prudence of this counsel; and, therefore, curbing his strong emotion, he went down to the gate and sat there; on hearing which the people hastened to present themselves before him, and all was well.

It might seem the obvious consequence of his victory, that David should repass the Jordan at the head of his conquering army, and resume his throne at Jerusalem. But the mass of the people had chosen another for their king, and by that act had virtually, to the extent of their power, deposed himself; and in such a case it would appear that the civil principles of the constitution required that he should, in a certain sense, be re-elected to the crown by the people, before he was entitled to regard himself as king over any but such as had continued to recognise him in that character. He therefore remained beyond Jordan until the tribes should decide to recall him. It seems there was a general disposition among the people to do this; they blamed one another for their rebellion against the king, and their remissness in recalling him; but all seemed to shrink from taking the first step in the matter. Judah, from its more intimate relations with David, might be expected to give the example; but Judah had been the head-quarters of the rebellion; and it appears that Jerusalem was in the occupation of Amasa, who, from the extent to which he had committed himself in Absalom's rebellion, might judge his case desperate, and hence use all his influence to prevent the king's return. This state of affairs being understood by David, he sent to the high-priests, who were still in Jerusalem, charging them to remind the elders of Judah of the obligation which seemed peculiarly to devolve upon them, and also to gain over Amasa by the offer to make him captain of the host in the place of Joab. This was attended with the desired result; and the elders of Judah sent back the answer, " Return thou, and all thy servants." On receiving this invitation, the king marched to the Jordan; and the men of Judah, on their part, assembled at Gilgal, to assist him over the river, and to receive him on his arrival. Among these, and foremost among them, were a thousand men of Benjamin, *headed by Shimei*, and including Ziba with his fifteen sons and twenty servants. No sooner had the king passed the river in a ferry-boat,* than Shimei threw himself at his feet, acknowledged his former crime,



[Ferry-Boat on the Nile.]

but trusted that it would be forgiven in consideration of his being the first in all Israel (except Judah) to come forward with a powerful party, to promote his restoration. In consideration of this circumstance, and, what was a greater merit and benefit—that his party was from the tribe of Benjamin—it would have been a most ungracious act had the king been inexorable. He therefore pardoned him freely, although some of his officers were for putting him to

* The first and only time we ever read of a ferry-boat on the Jordan. The interpretation is, however, rather doubtful. Some make it *a bridge of boats*. Many interpreters prefer the sense of the Septuagint and Syriac, which, instead of, " And there went over a ferry-boat to carry over the king's household, and to do what he thought good," read, " And these (the men of Judah and Benjamin) went over the Jordan before the king, and performed the service of bringing over the king's household, and in doing what he thought good."

death. For the like reason, probably,—that is, for fear of disgusting the valuable party to which he belonged, and in which he had much influence,—the king dared not entirely recall from Ziba the grant of Mephibosheth's lands which he had hastily made to him. When the son of Jonathan came to the Jordan to meet the king, he made it clear to him that he had been slandered by his steward, who had purposely neglected to provide him with the means of escape from Jerusalem when he purposed to join the king in his exile; so that, in consequence of his lameness, he had been obliged to remain behind; but, during his stay, had remained in retirement, and, as a mourner, had neither dressed his feet, trimmed his beard, nor changed his clothes. Under the circumstances, the king could only say, "Thou and Ziba divide the land;" to which the reply of Mephibosheth was worthy of the son of the generous Jonathan, "Yea, let him take all, since my lord the king is come again to his own house in peace."

The rich old man of Gilead, Barzillai, who had so liberally ministered to the wants of David during his exile, came down to the Jordan to see him over. The king would fain have persuaded him to accompany him to Jerusalem, that he might have an opportunity of rewarding his services; but Barzillai returned the touching reply, "How long have I to live that I should go up with the king to Jerusalem? I am this day eighty years old, and can I discern between good and evil? Can thy servant taste what I eat, or what I drink? Can I hear any more the voice of singing-men and singing-women? Why then should thy servant be yet a



[Singing Men.]

burden to my lord the king? Let thy servant just go over Jordan with the king; and then let thy servant, I pray thee, return, *that I may die in my own city, near the grave of my father and my mother*." He, however, recommended the fortunes of his son Chimham to the care of the king, who accordingly took that person with him to Jerusalem.

From the result, we may doubt the wisdom of the separate appeal which David had made to his own tribe of Judah, inasmuch as his more intimate connection with that tribe, by birth and by having reigned over it separately for seven years, required the most cautious policy on his side, to prevent his appearing to the other tribes as the king of a party. Now, when he had crossed the Jordan, people from all the tribes flocked to him to join in the act of recall and restoration. But when they came to consider of it, the other tribes were not willing to

forgive Judah for having been beforehand with them; or, in other words, that, instead of inviting them to join with themselves in the act of recall, the elders of Judah, by acting independently had enabled themselves to exhibit the appearance of more alacrity and zeal in the king's behalf, putting the other tribes in an unfavourable position by comparison. They alleged also their claim to be considered, on the ground that the ten tribes had tenfold the interest in the kingdom to that which the single tribe of Judah could claim. The answer of that tribe was the most impolitic and provoking that could be made. They alleged that seeing the king was of their own tribe, "their bone and their flesh," they had a right to take a peculiar and exclusive interest in his recall. This quarrel grew so hot, as to strengthen the natural disposition of the tribes to regard David as the king of the Judahites; and but a slight impulse was wanting to induce them to leave him to his own party. This impulse was supplied by one Sheba, of the discontented tribe of Benjamin, who, perceiving the state of feeling, blew the trumpet, and gave forth the Hebrew watchword of revolt, "To your tents, O Israel!" and, in the name of the tribes, disclaimed all further interest in David, and bade defiance to his adherents. The effect of this move, perhaps, exceeded his expectation. On a sudden he saw himself at the head of all the tribes, except that of Judah, which had occasioned this defection, and which was left almost alone to conduct the king from the Jordan to Jerusalem.

This circumstance, perhaps, supplied to David an additional motive for performing his secret promise of making Amasa captain of the host; as that person appears to have been high in favour with the tribes. But most readers will feel displeased that Joab should at this juncture—after the brilliant displays which he had so lately afforded of his loyalty, courage, and prudence—be displaced in favour of the rebel leader; and even if judged by the principles of the East, that every stroke of policy by which something may be gained, is a good stroke, whatever interests or honour it sacrifices,—even judged by this rule, the policy of this operation may very much be doubted, as, indeed, David himself had soon occasion to suspect. In fact, we agree with Hales, that in this David "seems to have acted rather ungratefully and unwisely, justifying Joab's reproach (on a former occasion), 'thou lovest thine enemies and hatest thy friends.' But the old grudge and jealousy which he entertained against 'the sons of Zeruiah,' who were above his control, and too powerful to be punished, as in Abner's case, combined with Joab's disobedience of orders in killing Absalom, which he could never forget, nor forgive, to the day of his death, seem to have got the better of his usual temporising caution and political prudence."

Amasa, the new captain of the host, failed to assemble the forces of Judah, to act against Sheba, within the time which the king had appointed. Whether this arose from want of zeal or ability in him, or from the disgust of the Judahites at the removal of Joab from an office which he had filled with great distinction for twenty-seven years, we know not. The king was in consequence obliged to order Joab's brother, Abishai, to take the command of the royal guards, and pursue Sheba without delay, before he could get into the fenced cities; for that otherwise he might raise a rebellion more dangerous than Absalom's. On this occasion Joab went with Abishai as a volunteer, followed by the company which formed his private command, for his zeal for his king and country rose paramount above his sense of the disgrace which had recently been inflicted on him. But when Amasa, with the force he had collected, joined them at Gibeon to take the command, Joab, under the pretext of saluting him as his "*brother*," slew him, just as in a former time he had slain Abner. He then took the command himself, causing proclamation to be made,—"He that favoureth Joab, and he that is for David, let him follow Joab." He then pursued Sheba, besieged him in a town to which he had fled, demanded his head from the inhabitants, and crushed the rebellion. He then returned triumphant to Jerusalem, self-reinstated in his former station, of which David dared no more to deprive him.

About the thirty-fourth year of David's reign* commenced a grievous famine, which continued for three successive years. When the sacred oracle was consulted, it declared that this

* So Hales; but some think that although the history *relates* the event in this place, it actually occurred in the early part of David's reign. And there are some very probable reasons for this conclusion.

was on account of the unatoned blood of the Gibeonites, whom Saul, in despite of the ancient treaty between that people and the Israelites, had cut off. This circumstance is not mentioned in the history of Saul; but, from the circumstances, it may perhaps be collected that Saul, finding the difficulty, to which we have adverted more than once, of forming a landed property for his family, where the land was already inalienably parcelled out among the people, had, under pretence of zeal for the interests of his own people, formed the design of utterly destroying the Gibeonites, and, as far as he was able, executed that design, giving their lands and wealth to his relatives, by the survivors of whom they were still possessed. As it therefore appeared that the calamity which punished this breach of national faith could only be averted through satisfaction being rendered to the remnant of the Gibeonites, David sent to learn what satisfaction they required. They, actuated by the powerful principles of revenge for blood, to which we had such frequent occasion to advert, refused to take " silver or gold," that is, a blood-fine, from the house of Saul, but demanded that execution should be performed upon seven members of that house. Seven members of Saul's family were accordingly sought out and given up to them. These were, two sons of Saul by his concubine Rizpah, and five grandsons by his eldest daughter Merab; Mephibosheth (who appears to have been the only other member of the family) was held back by David, on account of the covenant between him and Jonathan. The Gibeonites took these persons, and, after having slain them, hanged up their bodies upon a hill. This was against the law, which forbids that a body should be kept hanging after the going down of the sun on the first day. How long they thus remained, is not stated; but the famine had been occasioned by drought, and they hung there until the rains of heaven fell upon them. It was then made known to David that Rizpah, the mother of two of them, had spread sackcloth for herself upon the rock, and had there remained to protect the bodies from the birds of the air and the beasts of the field. Touched by this striking instance of the tenderness of maternal affection, David not only directed the bodies of these persons to be taken down, but he went [or sent] to Jabesh Gilead, to remove from under the oak in that place, the bones of Saul and Jonathan, and deposit them, with all respect, in the family sepulchre at Kelah in Benjamin, together with the remains of these unhappy members of their house.

David has been censured by some writers for consenting to the demand of the Gibeonites; but we have wasted the pains which, at different times, we have taken in expounding the doctrine of avengement for blood, if the reader has not perceived that the demand of the Gibeonites was one which the king could not refuse. *They* might have accepted the blood-fine; but this was optional with them, and they were perfectly entitled to refuse it, and to demand blood for blood. That the persons who were slain had themselves no hand in the crime for which they were punished, is more than we know; it is most likely that they were active parties in it, and still more that they reaped the profits of it. But even were this not the case, it is a well-known principle of blood-avengement that the heirs and relatives of the blood-shedder are responsible for the blood in their own persons, in case the avenger is not able to reach the actual perpetrator. That David had any interest in getting rid of these persons is equally absurd and untrue, for they made no pretensions to the crown themselves, nor did others make such pretensions for them. Even when the cause of Saul's house was most in want of a head, none of these persons appeared to advance their claims, nor did the warmest partisans of the cause dream of producing any of them in opposition to David.

Now that the Israelites had been weakened by two rebellions and three years of famine, the Philistines deemed the opportunity favourable for an attempt to shake off their yoke. They therefore renewed the war about the thirty-seventh year of David's reign, but were defeated in four engagements, and finally subdued. In all these engagements the Philistines exhibited their old passion for bringing gigantic champions into the field. In the first of these engagements David himself, notwithstanding his years, shrunk not from the combat with the giant Izbi-benob; but he waxed faint, and was in danger of being slain, had not the brave and trusty Abishai hastened to his relief, and killed the gigantic Philistine. After this the people would no more allow David to go forth in person to battle, " lest he should quench the

light of Israel." This war completely extinguished the gigantic race to which Goliah had belonged.

The numbering of the people was one of the last and most reprehensible acts of the reign of David. In itself, an enumeration of the population might be not only innocent but useful; it was the motive by which the deed was rendered evil. This motive, so offensive to God, was obviously supplied by the design of forcing all the Israelites into military service, with a view to foreign conquests; a design not only pitiable in so old a man, but in every way repugnant to both the internal and external polity of the theocratical government. That the census was not, as in former times, taken through the priests and magistrates, but by Joab, as commander-in-chief, assisted by the other military chiefs, sufficiently indicates the military object of the census; and if they were accompanied by the regular troops under their command, as the mention of their "encamping" leads one to suspect, it may seem that the object was known to and disliked by the people, and that the census could only be taken in the presence of a military force. Indeed the measure was repugnant to the wishes of the military commanders themselves, and was in a peculiar degree abhorrent to Joab, who saw the danger to the liberties of the people, and gave it all the opposition in his power, and undertook it reluctantly, when he found the king adhered to his purpose with all the obstinacy of age.

At the end of nine months and twenty days, Joab brought to the king the return of the adult male population, which was 900,000 men in the ten tribes of Israel, and 400,000, in round numbers, in the tribe of Judah alone; being together 1,300,000. But the tribes of Levi and Benjamin were not included in this account; for Joab did not finish the enumeration, probably in consequence of some indications of the Divine displeasure in the course of it. According to usual proportions, the entire population of Israel at this time (without including these two tribes) could not well have been less than 5,200,000. The same marks of the Divine displeasure which prevented the completion of the census, were probably those which awakened the slumbering conscience of David when the return was presented to him. He confessed before God that he had sinned, and prayed to be forgiven. The next morning it was made known to him, through the prophet Gad, that he had sinned indeed, and that his sin was not of such a nature as, with a due regard to the public principles of the government, could be allowed to pass without signal punishment. The choice of punishment was offered to him,—seven years of famine, three months to be pursued by his enemies, or three days of pestilence. The humbled monarch confessed the choice to be hard, but fixed on the latter alternative, as the more equal punishment, and such as seemed more immediately under the direction of Heaven. Accordingly, Jehovah sent a pestilence, which in the course of two days destroyed 70,000 men, from Dan to Beersheba. It was then beginning to visit Jerusalem, when God was pleased to put a stop to it, at the earnest prayer of David. He beheld the commissioned angel stand in the threshing-floor of Aruanah, a chief person among the Jebusites, as one preparing to destroy. And then he and the elders of Israel, all clad in sackcloth, fell upon their faces, and the king cried:—"Is it not I that commanded the people to be numbered? Even I it is that have sinned and done evil indeed; but as for these sheep, what have they done? Let thy hand, I pray thee, O Jehovah, my God, be on me, and on my father's house; but not on thy people that they should be plagued." This noble prayer was granted as soon as uttered. Through the prophet Gad, he was commanded to erect an altar, and offer sacrifices on that spot of ground where he had seen the destroying angel stand. The king accordingly bought the threshing-floor from Araunah (who would willingly have given it free of cost) for fifty shekels of silver;* he then hastened to erect an altar, and to offer thereon burnt-offerings, and peace-offerings; and a miraculous fire which descended from the heavens and consumed the victims,

* As this was little more than six pounds of our money, and paid not only for the threshing-floor, but for all that was upon it—cattle and implements—it seems to show that the value of the precious metals among the Hebrews, at this time, was much higher than it is now with us. It is, however, possible that Araunah merely set a *nominal* price to satisfy the delicacy of the king, who would not sacrifice to God at the cost of other people. There is an apparent contradiction between the account in 2 Sam. xxiv. 24, and 1 Chron. xxi. 25, which says that David gave Araunah 600 shekels *of gold* by weight (which would be no less than 1200*l.* of our money); but this may be removed by the very probable supposition that after David knew, by the acceptance of the altar erected on the spot, that the temple was to be built in this place, he made a further purchase of a sufficient site for the additional and much larger sum just named.

gave manifest proof of the Divine complacency, and so sanctified the spot as to point it out for the site of the future temple. The plague was stayed.

David was now advancing towards seventy years of age, and it appeared from the declining state of his health that his latter end could not be far off. This made Adonijah, his eldest surviving son, determine to take measures to secure the throne, which, had it been hereditary, would naturally have devolved to him. He doubtless knew that the crown had been assigned to his younger brother Solomon, and felt that this was perhaps his only opportunity of asserting what he conceived to be his natural rights. Adonijah was a very handsome man, and he had not at any time been baulked or contradicted by his father, many of whose sorrows arose from his excessive indulgence of his children. He now, in apparent imitation of Absalom, set up a splendid retinue, and courted popularity among the people; and he succeeded in drawing over to his party Joab, who now at last forsook his old master, and Abiathar the high-priest, who had shared all his fortunes. One day, when matters seemed ripe for the further development of his designs, he made a grand entertainment at Ain Rogel, the fountain in the king's garden, to which he invited all the king's sons, with the significant exception of Solomon; and the principal persons in the state, with the exception of those who were known to be in Solomon's interest. There he was proclaimed king in the usual form, " Long live the king Adonijah!" by the powerful party assembled.

In this important emergency, Nathan the prophet sent Bathsheba to inform the king of these proceedings, and afterwards came in himself and confirmed her account. By both he was reminded of his previous declarations, that Solomon was to be his successor in the throne. The old king was roused to his wonted energy by this intelligence; he instantly appointed Nathan the prophet, Zadok the priest, Benaiah, and his own guards the Cherethites and Pelethites who continued faithful, to take Solomon, and conduct him, mounted on the king's own mule, to the fountain of Gihon,* and there to anoint and proclaim him king. The ceremony was thus attended with every circumstance which could give it authority in the eyes of the people, as indicating the intention of the king, which, it was now well known, was according to the will of God. There was the mule, which none but David had ever been seen to ride, and which, he having habitually ridden, none but a king might ride; there was the prophet who could only sanction that which he knew to be the will of God; there was Zadok, with the holy anointing oil from the tabernacle; and there were the guards, whom the people had been accustomed to see in attendance only on the king. The whole ceremony was also directed to take place on one of the most public and frequented roads leading from Jerusalem. The people were adequately impressed by all these considerations and circumstances,—they heartily shouted, " Long live king Solomon!" The earth was, as it were, rent with the rejoicing clamour, mixed with the sounds of trumpets and of pipes. The party of Adonijah heard the noise; and when informed of the cause, they were all so struck with consternation at the promptitude and effect of this counter-move, that they dispersed immediately, and slunk away every man to his own house. Adonijah, seeing himself thus forsaken, and dreading nothing less than immediate death, fled to the refuge of the altar (erected on the threshing-floor of Araunah). Solomon being informed of this, sent to tell him that if by his future conduct he proved himself a worthy man, he would not hurt a hair of his head; but at the same time assured him that any future instance of a disloyal intention would be fatal to him. On leaving the altar Adonijah went and rendered his homage to the new king, after which he was ordered to retire to his own house.

The waning spark of David's life gleamed up once again before it finally expired. He availed himself of this to call a general assembly of the nation, to ratify the coronation of Solomon, and to receive the declaration of his views and designs. The aged king was able to stand up on his feet as he addressed the assembly at considerable length. Perceiving from the revolts of Absalom and Adonijah, into which last some of his own stanchest friends had been drawn, that the principle of primogeniture was likely to interfere very seriously with the

* Of which see the Physical History, p. cxcvii.

true doctrine of the theocracy, he was careful to point out how the sceptre had been assigned to Judah, not the first-born of Jacob; and in the tribe of Judah, to the family of Jesse, not the first or most powerful of that tribe; and of the eight sons of Jesse, to David the youngest; and of the sons of David, to Solomon, at a time when there were living three (if not four*) older than he. He then proceeded to state the reasons which had prevented him from building to the Lord that temple which he had designed, and since this great work had been reserved for the peaceable reign of his son, he solemnly exhorted him and the nation to erect that temple, according to the model which he had himself supplied, and to contribute liberally themselves towards it, in addition to the ample stores and materials, which in the course of his reign he had been enabled to provide. He concluded with a most noble and devout thanksgiving to the Lord for all the mercies which he had shown to himself and to his people; and this, with the rest of his conduct on this occasion, shows that whatever were now the bodily infirmities of the aged king, his better faculties were still in their prime.

Solomon was now again anointed king in the presence, and with the sanction of the assembly, by Zadok, who himself was now declared and recognised as sole high-priest, Abiathar being deposed from his participation in that dignity on account of his having gone over to Adonijah. It is impossible not to see in all this a strenuous assertion by David of the theocratical principles of the constitution, which rendered conclusive and final any appointment which the Divine King had made, or might make. And for this he deserves the more honour, as there is good reason to think that, for himself merely, as a father, he would quite as soon have seen Absalom or Adonijah on the throne as Solomon. Of Abiathar it was quite necessary to make an example; for as high-priest he, of all men, ought to have been sensible of the obligation of the divine appointment, the maintenance of which had now become one of the most marked and grand prerogatives of Jehovah as king of the Hebrews, and the one which was calculated to keep His superiority present to the minds of the people. If this prerogative were allowed to be contemned by the high-priest, who should be its most strenuous supporter, the people would not be likely to hold it in much respect.

The enthusiasm manifested by the king for the object which, for many years past, he had so much at heart, kindled a corresponding zeal in the people, who presented liberal offerings for the great work which Solomon was destined to execute.

The following day was spent as a high festival. Holocausts of numerous steers, and rams, and lambs were offered to Jehovah; and also abundant peace-offerings on which the people feasted, with great gladness, before they departed to their homes. This was in fact, the corontion-feast of Solomon. He, being now twice anointed, (1) and formally recognised by the people, mounted the throne of his father, and administered the government while David still lived.

It was not, however, long before David felt that his last hour approached. He then sent for his son, to give to him his last counsels. He first of all recapitulated the gracious promises which God had made to him and his posterity, and then reminded Solomon that these promises were only, in their first and obvious sense, to be understood as conditional, and depending upon their observance of the divine law; so that they might expect their prosperity to rise and fall in proportion to their obedience. He then proceeded to advise him as to the course he should take with reference to certain persons whom his own history has brought conspicuously under the notice of the reader. The predominating influence of the sons of Zeruiah had, throughout his reign, been very galling to himself, and he advised his son not to incur the same grievance, or to submit to it. As to Joab, he had, through policy, been pardoned for his part in Adonijah's rebellion, as David himself had, from like reasons, been compelled to overlook the crimes of which he had been guilty—such as the murders of Abner and Amasa: yet should he again offend, Solomon was advised to bring him to condign punishment, by which he would strike terror into evil doers, and, more than by any other act, evince the strength and firmness of his government.

The pardon which Shimei had asked, beside the Jordan, with a thousand men at his back,

* Chileab, the son of Abigail, is not historically named. The probability is that he died early.

could not well have been refused; and David had no wish to annul it. But aware of the character of this disaffected and dangerous Benjamite, he cautioned Solomon against him, and advised to keep him under his eye in Jerusalem, and watch him well that he might have no opportunity of stirring up seditions among the tribes. And should his conduct again offer occasion, David counselled the young king not to spare him, but at once rid his kingdom of so suspicious and malevolent a character.

David appears to have survived the coronation of Solomon about six months; for although he reigned seven years and six months over Judah, and thirty-three years over all Israel, yet the whole duration is reckoned only forty years in 2 Sam. v. 4, 5; 1 Chron. xxix. 27. The interval he seems to have employed in the development, for the benefit of his son, of those plans and regulations which had long before been formed and considered in his own mind, and to which the due effect was afterwards given by his son. These are fully stated in the five first chapters of the second book of Chronicles.

David was seventy years of age when " he slept with his fathers." At that time certainly the period of human life was reduced to the present standard; for in recording his death at this age, the historian says, " He died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honour." He was buried in a stately tomb, which, according to a touching custom, still prevalent in the East, he had *prepared for himself*, in that part of the city (on Mount Zion) which he had covered with buildings, and which was called after him, " the city of David."

Our view of the character of David has been incorporated with the preceding history of his reign. We are, therefore, unwilling to offer any separate summary of that character; and with pleasure avail ourselves of the sketch which Jahn has supplied,—the rather as it will be found fully conformable to the view we have taken:—

" David, as a man, was, in his sentiments and conduct, a true Israelite: as a king he was a faithful vassal of Jehovah. The Psalms, in which he pours forth his whole heart, exhibit a sincere and zealous worshipper of the true God, who places his religion, not in offerings, prayers, hymns, and other external acts of devotion, but in obedience to the divine precepts, in which he seeks and finds all his happiness. God, and obedience to his will, is with David everywhere the first and predominant idea, which consoles him in his flight from Saul, and attends him to the throne.

" All deliverance from danger, and all victories, from the first over Goliah to that over the Mesopotamian and Syrian kings, he expected from the aid of God, and attributed to the assistance of the Supreme Judge of men and nations. As became a viceroy of Jehovah, he in all enterprises viewed himself as dependent on God, and bound to execute the designs of his lord and sovereign. He therefore scrupulously followed the directions of the sacred oracle and the prophets; he supported the authority of the priests and Levites, though he was so far from being governed by them, that he, on the contrary, prescribed to them laws and institutions; he dedicated to the sanctuary the spoil, for which he was indebted to the providence of Jehovah, that at some future period a palace might be erected more suitable to the majesty of God; he loved his subjects, caused justice to be done to them, called them his brethren, and thought himself not degraded by mingling with them in public worship, like any other subject of Jehovah. The Hebrews, therefore, during the reign of David, clearly recognised the theocratical nature of their constitution.

" The imprecations and curses in the Psalms of David are to be judged of according to the knowledge and situation of the ancient world. They refer either to inimical nations or to individual oppressors of the people, and so are nothing more than prayers for victory and deliverance; or they refer to the personal enemies of David, and thus are indications of what transgressors are to expect from a just God, and consequently, admonitions to the readers or singers not to suffer themselves to be borne away by a torrent of iniquity and vice. Poets express everything strongly, and under their pen, advice and admonition become a blessing or a curse. Such strong expressions, therefore, are so many proofs of a zealous love of virtue and an irreconcilable hatred of sin. With a view to warn and deter from vice, the Hebrews,

according to the law of Moses, were accustomed solemnly to pronounce curses on the secret transgressors of the law; and considered in this light, who can justly find fault with the practice? Yea, even God himself, in this theocracy, laid curses, that is, threatenings of temporal punishment on transgressors. After all, these curses in the Psalms of David may be in part ascribed to the translators; and the original text, properly understood, may contain merely threatenings of what would take place as the punishment of crime. If David was in reality so vindictive as his curses seem to intimate, why did he not make Saul, his greatest enemy, feel the weight of his vengeance when he had him in his power? How, in such a situation, could a revengeful man restrain himself?

"The adultery with Bathsheba, and the murderous transaction with Uriah, are shocking crimes, which David himself is so far from excusing, that he confesses and laments them with the greatest horror. But how earnest was his repentance, and with what submission to the will of God did he bear those calamities which were sent for his punishment, and which, as they were caused by his own children, must have been so much the more distressing to his tender parental feelings! Do we not here again see the soul entirely and steadily devoted to God?

"The numbering of the people in order, as it would seem, to push conquests into foreign countries, and the above-mentioned transaction with Bathsheba, are the only two instances in which David seems to have forgotten himself and his God. He was indeed no ideal model of human perfection: he was not without the blemishes incident to human nature; but on the whole, he was an example worthy of the imitation of his successors, and according as they appear on comparison with him, the sacred writers estimate their characters."

The important part which David took in the organisation of the Hebrew state, and even of the church, has already been alluded to, and a cursory view of such of his operations as are known to us may be suitably introduced in this place.

The question respecting a standing army is not one which, on its abstract political grounds requires here to be noticed. From the peculiar nature of the Hebrew constitution, there are few public questions which admit of being considered solely with reference to their general policy. In so considering them we always find that some essential matter as regards the Israelites, has been overlooked and omitted. In Palestine, as generally in the East at this day, every citizen was from his childhood trained to the use of arms; and therefore the state possessed in its people a body of ready-trained militia, so far lessening the need of a standing army. And, certainly, if there ever was a state in which a standing army was unnecessary in itself, and repugnant to the first principles of the constitution, that was the state of Israel. But kings will have standing armies of some kind or other. And David was a king, far from being untainted with the vice of military ambition. He increased and organised the army founded by Saul; and was disposed to have gone far greater and more dangerous lengths in his latter days, but for the very serious check which his numbering the people, for military objects, incurred.

As organised by David, the army consisted of 280,000 men, every 24,000 of whom had a separate commander, the whole being under the "captain of the host," who, during nearly the whole of David's reign was Joab. The divisions of 24,000 performed military duty alternately, namely, a month at a time in succession, so that all of them went home and attended to their own affairs during eleven months in the year. We know nothing about their pay; but from the analogy of similar things, we should judge that only the 24,000 in actual service were supported and equipped from the royal treasury. It is not likely that they had any pay in money, but they had a due share of the spoil in time of war.

A division of the army, when in the field, is mentioned in this reign,* but it did not originate with David, as it occurs on various previous occasions.† These divisions appear to have corresponded to the centre and right and left wings of modern armies; and the com-

* 2 Sam. xviii.

† Gen. xiv. 14, 15; Job i. 17; Judges vii. 16, 20; 1 Sam. xi. 11.

manders of them appear to be those to whom the name of שלישים, *shalishim*, is given, and were persons of high consideration.

How great was the authority of the commander-in-chief appears throughout the history of David, whether we look to Abner or to Joab; and that this officer continued to enjoy great influence in later times, is indicated in 2 Kings iv. 13.

Besides the regular army, David had a guard, which was at all times in attendance. It seems, as we have already noticed, to have been composed of two corps or bands, which are mentioned in the history as the Cherethites and Pelethites. Some have conjectured that they were foreigners from the etymology of their names: this is uncertain, but for the fact that they formed the royal guard, we have the authority of Josephus; and the Chaldea paraphrast alleges that they were respectively slingers and archers. The body of Gathites, of which Ittai was commander, we do not ourselves question formed a guard about the person of the king. The policy or principle of such a guard of foreigners needs no further illustration than a reference to the Swiss guards of the former kings of France. But concerning these Gathites we have already stated all that we know or can conjecture.

The opposition and almost all but the genealogical distinction between the Israelites and the ancient inhabitants of the land, seems to have entirely disappeared in the time of David, so that persons of Canaanitish origin found employment in the armies of the king. Such was Uriah *the Hittite*, who appears even to have held a subordinate command, and was obviously a person of some consequence. Of still greater importance was Araunah the Jebusite, whom some take to have been a native prince,* who retained, even in Jerusalem, much consequence and property, which last was so much respected, that David would not accept the smallest portion of it as a present, but insisted on paying for it. There is, however, much reason to conclude that these and many other Canaanites had become proselytes to the Jewish faith.

To return to David's military establishments. An ingenious writer is of opinion that his band of "worthies" formed a sort of order of knighthood. "From 2 Sam. xxiii. 8—39, it appears that the heroes or 'mighty men,' during the reign of David, were thirty-seven in number, including Joab, who was commander-in-chief of all his forces. These warriors were divided into three classes, the first and second of which consisted each of three men, Jashobeam, Eleazer, and Shammah; Abishai, Benaiah, and Asahel; and the third class was composed of the remaining thirty, of whom Asahel appears to have been the head. Such is the list, according to 2 Sam. xxiii.; but in 1 Chron. ix. 10—47, the list is more numerous, and differs considerably from the preceding. The most probable solution of these variations is, that the first list contains the worthies who lived in the former part of David's reign, and that it underwent various changes in the course of his government of the kingdom of Israel. At the head of all these "mighty men" was Jashobeam, the son of Hachmoni (1 Chron. xi. 11), who, from his office, in 2 Sam. xxiii. 8 (Hebrew and marginal reading), is termed "*Joseb-Bassebet, the Hachmonite, head of the three*," and whose military appellation was "*Adino-he-Ezni* (*the lifting up, or striking with, the spear*), because he lifted up the spear against, or encountered, 300 soldiers at once. However extraordinary it may seem, we may here perceive a distinct order of knighthood, similar to our modern orders, and presenting the same honorary degrees, and of which Jashobeam, according to modern parlance, was the grand master. An institution of this kind was, in every respect, adapted to the reign, the character and the policy of David."†

Our acquaintance with the measures taken by David in the organisation of the civil government, is almost confined to the names and offices of the several functionaries to whom he confided various departments of the public business. Most of these offices were probably intro-

* This, which is entertained by the Jews and many Christians, is founded on the text, 2 Sam. xxiv. 23, rendered in our public version, "All these things did Araunah, as a king give unto the king," wherein the note of similitude is wanting: and it reads, "a king unto the king." Hence it has been supposed by some that he was the Jebusite king before Jerusalem was taken; or, at least, that he was of the royal race, and probably the son and heir of the one who last reigned. The expression may, however, only denote the royal munificence of his character.

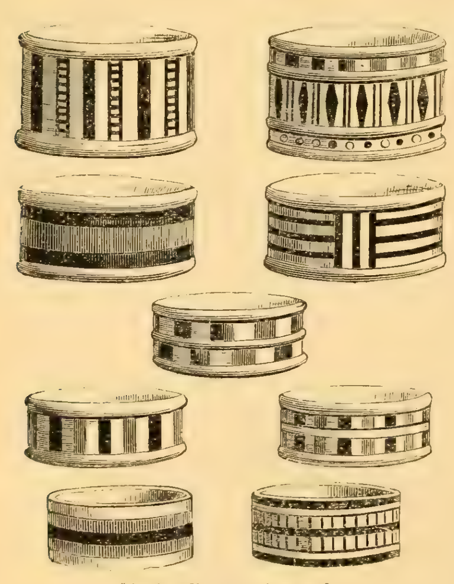
† Coquerel, 'Biographie Sacrée,' tom. ii. p. 167; cited by Horne, iii. 220.

duced by him; and are, for the most part, such as were found in the ancient and existing governments of the East. The information is valuable in so far as it makes us acquainted with the fashion after which the business of the state was distributed: but as the organisation commenced by David was more fully elaborated by Solomon, it will be better to connect with his reign such further notice as it requires.

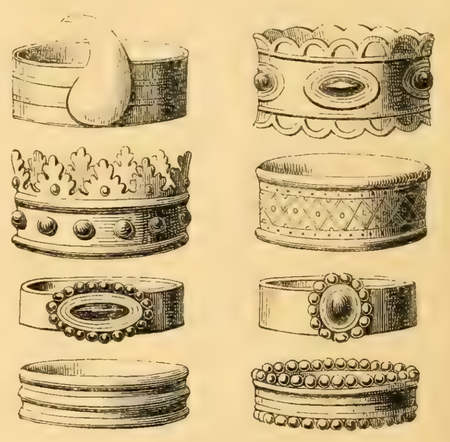
During the reign of David the Israelites experienced few of the evils from the kingly government which Samuel had predicted. The question, how the regal establishments and standing army were to be supported, does not appear to have occurred. His conquests in the neighbouring countries brought him such immense spoil, as, together with the produce of the permanent tributes imposed on the conquered nations, enabled him not only to support all his expenses, but to lay by vast wealth towards the erection of the temple to be built by his successor. For this great work, which for many years he had so much at heart, and which appears to have engaged a large portion of his thoughts, his preparations of every kind were so extensive, that he appears to us fully entitled to the chief share of whatever glory the founder of that celebrated fabric may fairly claim. For not only did he provide a great proportion of all kinds of materials, with vast quantities of gold and silver, but he purchased and prepared the site, and furnished Solomon with the plan of the building. His care extended still further; for he re-organised the whole Levitical institution, with a view to a more splendid ritual service in the future temple, and to the equal distribution of duties among the whole Levitical tribe. All his arrangements in this matter were religiously adhered to by Solomon, in assigning the priests and Levites their service in the new Temple. For this reason it appears more advisable to notice these arrangements for the Temple service, in connection with that account of the Temple itself which the next chapter will contain.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES.

(1) Armlets, p. 463.—We suppose that the armlet found on the person of Saul, and brought, together with his crown, to David, was one of the insignia of royalty, and not, as some have imagined, a mere personal ornament of value which the king happened to wear. This conclusion is amply supported by the ancient and still subsisting customs of the East. When



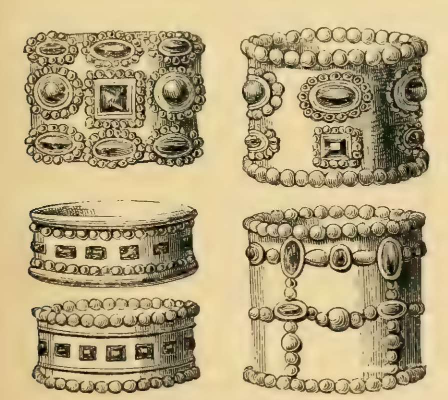
[Ancient Egyptian Armlets.]



[Indian Armlets.]

worn *by men*, they have been in nearly all eastern countries marks of dignity, and, in some, of exclusively royal dignity. If we consult the numerous figures which the sculp-

tures and paintings of ancient Egypt offer, we find armlets very frequent ornaments of the woman; but among men they only appear on the figures of the kings. D'Herbelot, in mentioning the investiture of Malek Rahim in the dominions and honours of his father (Alp Arslan) by the Khalif, Kayem Bemrillah, observes that the ceremony of investiture was in such cases effected by sending to the Sultan, who received that honour, together with his patent, a crown, *bracelets*, and a chain. In India the armlet was a mark of sovereignty at the court of the Grand Moguls. It still is such in Persia, where no man but the king wears armlets. They figure conspicuously on the person, and even in the pictures of that potentate, and are, for their size, probably the most splendid and costly articles of jewellery in the world, the two which he wears on state occasions being, together, deemed worth a million sterling. This use of the bracelet was not, in ancient times, unknown in our own country. Thus the emblems of supreme authority among the British kings were golden bands, worn around the neck, *arms*, and knees.* One such ornament, set with jewels, and supposed to have belonged to Caractacus, was found at the Herefordshire beacon.† In the early Saxon era, such ornaments, although become more common, were confined to persons of high distinction, and if of gold, were considered proper presents for the sovereign.



[Persian Armlets.]

(²) MODES OF SITTING, p. 474.—The text says that "David went in *and sat* before Jehovah," and in that posture gave utterance to a very earnest address of thanksgiving and prayer. Commentators have taken considerable pains in the endeavour to explain how he happened to sit down on such an occasion, instead of standing or kneeling. The plain fact is, that in the East the sitting postures are various, and that one of them is considered as respectful, or even reverent, as any posture can be.

The Orientals now sit upon the ground, or on carpets or cushions laid on the ground. And although there is evidence that the Israelites used raised seats, such as chairs and stools, it is clear that they also sat on the ground in the various postures now used in the East. The case, in this respect, appears to have been much the same with them as with the Egyptians, who, although they used all kinds of raised seats, yet also sat on the floor in every variety of posture. This is evinced by the small cut introduced in the text. The posture of crouching, shown in the second figure of the cut, was very common among the Egyptians, but is now rather unusual in the East. Sitting cross-legged, a posture rather awkwardly represented in the last figure, is now the usual and ordinary posture in common life. It is the same as that which tailors adopt in this country, and which to those used to it, is really the sitting posture which gives more perfect repose to the body than any other. The postures in which the figures 1 and 3 are represented in the cut—of sitting on the heels—are more difficult, and give less repose. These two were postures of respect among the Egyptians; and they are figured in them when in the presence of their superiors, as *well as when bearing sacred emblems before the shrines of their gods*. And this posture of sitting on the heels—the only one in which the Egyptians could sit before the shrine of their gods, is obviously that in which David sat before the shrine of Jehovah. This continues to be the posture of respect in the East; and no one thinks of using any other in the presence of a superior. Great personages sit thus, if they sit at all, in the presence of kings; and it is one of the positions, and the only *sitting* one, which the Moslems take in their devotions.

(³) AMMON, p. 477.—The site of the ancient capital of the Ammonites was first indicated by Seetzen, and has since been visited by various travellers. The original names of this town, which existed in the time of Moses, Ammon, and Rabbath-Ammon, was for a time observed by that of Philadelphia, which it took from Ptolemy Philadelphus, by whom it was rebuilt. That any portions of the ruins are of earlier date than this rebuilding by him, it would be absurd to expect; and most of them

* Turner's 'Anglo-Saxons,' i. 383.
† Nash's 'Worcestershire,' ii. 142.

are obviously of later date, and may, for the most part, be referred to the period of the Roman domination in Syria. The present natives of the country now know nothing of the name of Philadelphia, but give to the site its original name of Ammon.

The very precise manner in which the prophecies applicable to the city have been fulfilled, gives to the place more interest than it could historically claim, although even that is not inconsiderable. The description which is the most available for our purposes is that which Lord Lindsay has given. In transcribing it, however, we omit the account of the ruins, which although of high interest in themselves, are not such as the purpose of the present work requires us to describe:—

"The scenery waxed drearier and drearier as, at ten hours and a half from Jerash, we descended a precipitous stony slope into the Valley of Ammon, and crossed a beautiful stream,* bordered at intervals by strips of stunted grass, often interrupted; no oleanders cheered the eye with their rich blossoms; the hills on both sides were rocky and bare, and pierced with excavations and natural caves. Here, at a turning in the narrow valley, commences the antiquities of Ammon. It was situated on both sides the stream: the dreariness of its present aspect is quite indescribable—it looks like the abode of death; the valley stinks with dead camels: one of them was rotting in the stream, and although we saw none among the ruins, they were absolutely *covered* in every direction with their dung. That morning's ride would have convinced a sceptic; how runs the prophecy?—'I will make Rabbah a stable for camels, and the Ammonites for flocks; and ye shall know that I am the Lord!'

"Nothing but the croaking of frogs, and screams of wild birds broke the silence, as we advanced up this valley of desolation. Passing on the left an unopened tomb (for the singularity in these regions is where the tomb has *not* been violated), several broken sarcophagi, and an aqueduct, in one spot full of human skulls, a bridge on the right, a ruin on the left, apparently the southern gate of the town, a high wall and lofty terrace, with one pillar still standing, the remains probably of a portico, we halted under the square building supposed by Seetzen to have been a mausoleum, and after a hasty glance at it, hurried up the glen in search of the principal ruins, which we found much more extensive and interesting than we expected, not certainly in such good preservation as those of Jerash, but designed on a much grander scale. Storks were perched in every direction on the tops of the different buildings, others soared at an immense height above us."

* Called Moiet Ammon. It has its source in a pond a few hundred paces from the south-west end of the town, and after passing under ground several times, empties itself into the Zerka (Jabbok).

Then follows a more detailed account of the ruins, the predominant architectural character of which is indicated by the very fine specimen inserted in our text. By far the best and most ample description of the whole is that which has been given by Buckingham in his 'Travels among the Arab Tribes,' 67-81. After his description, Lord Lindsay resumes:—

"Such are the relics of the ancient Ammon, or rather of Philadelphia, for no building there can boast of a prior date to that of the change of name. It was a bright cheerful morning, but still the valley is a very dreary spot, even when the sun shines brightest. Vultures were garbaging on a camel, as we slowly rode back through the glen, and reascended the *akiba* by which we entered it. Ammon is now quite deserted except by the Bedouins, who water their flocks at its little river. We met sheep and goats by thousands and camels by hundreds coming down to drink, all in beautiful condition. How—let me again cite the prophecy—how runs it? 'Ammon shall be a desolation!—Rabbah of the Ammonites...shall be a desolate heap!—I will make Rabbah a stable for camels, and the Ammonites a couching place for flocks; and ye shall know that I am the Lord!'"

(4) Absalom's Sepulchre. p. 486.—Of the monument represented in the engraving, a very good and satisfactory account has been given by Mr. Wilde, whose description we shall here transcribe:—

"Descending to Gethsemane, we continued our course through the valley of Jehoshaphat by those remarkable monuments denominated the Sepulchres of the Patriarchs, which have been described, as well as drawn with great accuracy by most writers on Palestine. They are placed on the eastern side of Kedron, nearly opposite the southern angle of the present wall, and are some of the rarest and most extraordinary specimens of sepulchral architecture in existence. They are hewn out of the solid rock, with temple-like fronts. Some of them are enormous masses separated from the rest of the rock, and left standing like so many monolithic temples—monuments that record as well (if not more so) the labour and ingenuity of their constructors as those to whose memory they have been erected.

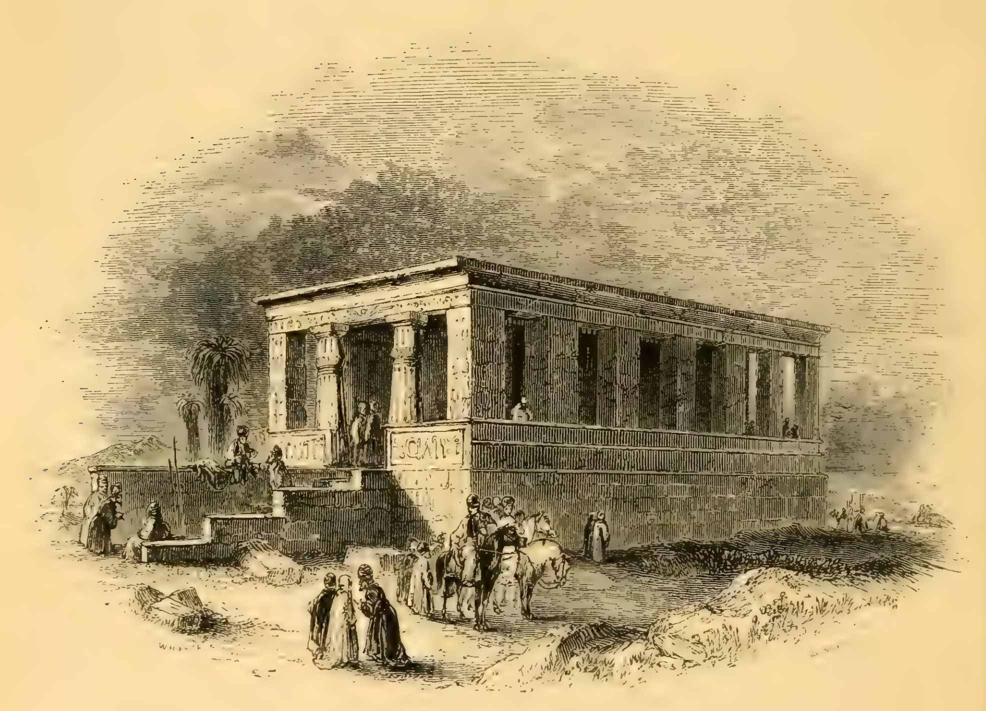
The names assigned to these tombs are Jehoshaphat, James, Zechariah, and Absalom. This latter is the most elegant and tasteful piece of architecture in Judea, indeed, I might almost add, in the East, and viewed from the valley beneath, it is one of the most beautiful tombs that I have ever seen in any country. It consists of a mass of rock twenty-four feet square, separated from the rest, and standing in a small enclosure that surrounds three of its sides. It has four pilasters with Ionic capitals on each front, the two outer ones being flat, while those in the centre are semicircular; the frieze is ornamented with triglyphs. The upper part is composed of several pieces, and surmounted by a small spire terminating in a bunch of leaves. There is a hole in the back immediately beneath the architrave through which I was enabled to climb into its interior. As the door by which it was entered was concealed, this opening was formed, in all probability, for the purpose of rifling the sepulchre of its contents. Within, it presents the usual form of eastern tombs, having niches at the sides for bodies. The general opinion of antiquaries is, that the Grecian architecture exhibited on the exterior of this rock is no test of the date of its construction; and, that it was added in later times, and a similar workmanship is visible in the other neighbouring tombs. To it may be referred that rebuke of our Lord to the Pharisees, regarding their garnishing the sepulchres of the prophets. The tradition is, that this pillar, of which we have an account in the Book of Samuel, was erected by Absalom. 'Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and reared up for himself a pillar, which is in the *king's dale;* for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance; and he called the pillar after his own name; and it is called unto this day Absalom's Place.' Josephus also informs us that 'Absalom had erected for himself a stone marble pillar in the *king's dale*, two furlongs distant from Jerusalem, which he named Absalom's Stand, saying, that if his children were killed, his name would remain by that pillar.' I see no reason to doubt the tradition regarding this monument, although the historian has stated it to be a greater distance from the city than we now find it; but this is an error into which he often falls. In confirmation of its supposed origin I may add, that it has ever been a place of detestation to the Hebrews; and every Jew who passes it by throws a stone at it to this day, so that a large cairn has formed round its base.

"The style of the whole of these four sepulchres, but especially the two I have more particularly noticed, is very peculiar, and is totally different from other tombs in this neighbourhood. An inspection of them would lead us to believe that, at the time of erection, the Hebrews had not quite forgot the lessons on architecture which their forefathers had learned in Egypt. Around these mausolea, upon the sides of the rocks, and the slopes of Mount Olivet, there are hundreds of plain flat gravestones belonging to the Jews. All these have Hebrew inscriptions, some of which a Hebrew scholar resident in the city informed me were dated a short time subsequent to the Christian era."*

* Wilde's 'Narrative of a Voyage,' p. 325-7.

CHAPTER III.

SOLOMON.



[Egyptian Temple.]

King Solomon succeeded his father David in the year 1030, B.C., when he was about twenty years of age. Never monarch ascended the throne with greater advantages, or knew better how to secure and improve them. Under David, the kingdom had been much extended, and brought under good regulations. The arms of the Hebrews had for so many years been feared by all the neighbouring nations, so that the habit of respect and obedience on their part, offered to the new king the reasonable prospect, confirmed by a Divine promise, that his reign should be one of peace. *Now*, the predominant tribe of Judah lay as a lion and as a lioness, which no nation ventured to rouse up.* The Hebrews were the ruling people, and their empire the principal monarchy of Western Asia. From the Mediterranean Sea and the Phœnicians to the Euphrates, in its nearer and remoter bounds,—from the river of Egypt and the Elanitic Gulf to Berytus, Hamath, and Thapsacus, all were subject to the dominion of Solomon; nor were the tribes which wander in northern Arabia, eastward to the Persian Gulf, unconscious of his rule. At home, the Canaanites had not, as we have seen, been either

* Gen. xlix, 9; Num. xxiii. 24, xxiv. 9.

entirely expelled or annihilated; but they had become obedient and peaceable subjects, and, which was of importance to an eastern king, liable to services which no king dared to impose upon the Israelites themselves. Jahn calculates that their whole number may have been about 400,000 or 500,000, since ultimately 153,000 were able to render soccage to the king. The warlike and civilised Philistines, the Edomites, Moabites, and Ammonites, the Syrians of Damascus, and some tribes of the nomadic Arabians of the desert, were all tributary to him. The revenues derived from the subject states were large; and the wealth in the royal treasures great beyond calculation: and the king had the enterprise and talent to open new sources through which riches were poured into the country from distant lands. Nor were the prospects and promises with which this reign opened, frustrated in its continuance. "Peace gave to all his subjects prosperity; the trade which he introduced brought wealth into the country, and promoted the sciences and arts, which there found an active protector in the king, who was himself distinguished for his learning. The building of the temple and of several palaces introduced foreign artists, by whom the Hebrews were instructed. Many foreigners, and even sovereign princes, were attracted to Jerusalem, in order to see and converse with the prosperous royal sage. The regular progress of all business, the arrangements for security from foreign and domestic enemies, the army, the cavalry, the armories, the chariots, the palaces, the royal household, the good order in the administration, and in the service of the court, excited as much admiration as the wisdom and learning of the viceroy of Jehovah. *So much was effected by the single influence of David, because he scrupulously* conformed himself to the theocracy of the Hebrew state."*

Such is the *argument* to the history of Solomon's reign, to the details of which we now proceed.

Although Solomon was not the first-born, nor even the eldest living son of David, but succeeded to the throne through the special appointment of the Supreme King, Jehovah,—there was one circumstance which, from the usual notions of the Orientals, could not but be highly favourable to him, even had *all* his elder brothers been alive. Amnon had been born before his father became king, and Absalom and Adonijah while he was king of Judah only; while Solomon was born when his father was king over all Israel, and lord over many neighbouring states. And in the East there is a strong prejudice in favour of him who is the son of *the king* and of *the kingdom*, that is, who is born while his father actually *reigns* over the states which he leaves at his death. Thus, therefore, if at the death of David, Amnon and Absalom had been alive, as well as Adonijah and Solomon, there might have been a contest among them on these grounds:—Amnon would have claimed as the eldest son of David; Absalom would probably have disputed this claim on the ground, first, that he was the first-born *after David became a king;* and, secondly, on the ground that his mother was of a royal house: this claim could not have been disputed by Adonijah; but he would have considered his own claim good as against Amnon, on the one hand, and as against Solomon on the other. But Solomon might have claimed on the same ground as the others against Amnon; and against Absalom and Adonijah, on the ground that their father was only king of Judah when they were born, but king of all Israel at the time of his own birth. And this claim would, in fact, have been but a carrying out of the principle on which Absalom and Adonijah are supposed to oppose Amnon; and in this claim there would have seemed so much reason to an Oriental, that, apart from all other considerations, we doubt not it would have found many adherents in Israel; and we *have* no doubt that it did operate in producing a more cheerful acquiescence in the preference given to Solomon.

Soon after the death of his father, Solomon discovered a new plot of Adonijah's, so deeply laid and carefully veiled, that he even ventured to make the king's own mother, Bathsheba, an acting though unconscious party in it. And here it may be proper to observe, that in eastern countries, where polygamy is allowed, or not forbidden, by the law, and where the kings have numerous wives and concubines, there is no dignity analogous to that which the

* Jahn, b. iv. sect. 33.

sole wife of a sovereign occupies in Europe. In fact, there is no *queen*, in our sense of the word, as applied to the consort of a king. But the *mother* of the king (and next to her, or instead of her, the mother of the heir apparent) is the woman of the greatest influence and highest station in the state, and the one whose condition is the most queenly of any which the East affords. According to this view, Bathsheba—during the latter part of David's reign, as mother of the heir apparent, and during at least the early portion of Solomon's reign, as mother of the king,—was, in fact, the queen of Israel; whence in both periods we find her taking a part in public affairs, which, however slight, is such as none but a woman so placed could have taken.

The first manifestation of Adonijah's design was to endeavour to procure permission to espouse Abishag, one of the wives of his father, whom he had taken in his last days and had left a virgin. He had the address to interest Bathsheba in his object, and to get her to propose the subject to the king, although part of what he said to her as an inducement was well calculated to awaken her suspicions: "Thou knowest," said he, "that the kingdom was mine, and that all Israel set their faces on me, that I should reign; howbeit the kingdom is turned about, and is become my brother's, for it was his from the Lord."



[King (the Sultan) on Throne.]

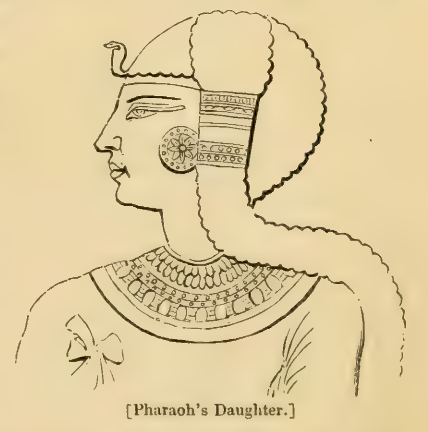
The king was seated on his throne when Bathsheba appeared before him to urge the suit of Adonijah. He rose when he beheld her, and bowed to her; after which he caused a seat to be brought and placed at his right hand for her. She then made "the one small petition" with which she was charged. The king instantly saw through the whole; and knew enough of the several parties to feel assured (or actually knew) that the measure had been prompted by Joab and Abiathar, or that at least they were parties to the ulterior design. According to what we have already stated respecting the widows of a deceased king, it is obvious that Solomon recognised in this insidious demand a plan formed to accredit the former pretensions of Adonijah. He, therefore, answered warmly, "And why dost thou ask Abishag, the Shunamite, for Adonijah? Ask for him the kingdom also; for he is mine elder

brother, even for him, *and for Abiathar, the priest, and for Joab the son of Zeruiah.*" By this he clearly intimated that he considered Joab and Abiathar as parties in this new plot, and, as such, liable to the punishments which he proceeded to inflict. Adonijah he ordered to be put to death, as one whom it was no longer safe to pardon. On receiving this news, Joab justified the suspicions (if not more) of the king, by fleeing for refuge to the sanctuary of the altar—a plain act of a guilty conscience. When this was told to Solomon, he ordered Benaiah to go and put him to death. Benaiah went, and ordered him, in the king's name, to come forth. This he refused, saying, " Nay, but I will die here !" either in the hope that Solomon would so far regard the altar, as not to slay him, or that he would die there in the hope that God, whose altar it was, would be gracious to him. This being a new case, in which Benaiah liked not to act on his own responsibility, he returned to report the matter to the king, who, with great firmness, and with a freedom from superstition which shows how well he understood the letter and spirit of the law, said, " Do as he hath said, and slay him there, and bury him, that thou mayest take away the innocent blood, which Joab shed, from me and from the house of my father." So Joab was slain at the altar, and buried in the garden of his own house in the wilderness. Benaiah, who had been his executioner, was made commander-in-chief in his room. It appears that in the Hebrew kingdom, as in some other ancient, and some modern states, it was the duty of the king's chief officer to execute his sentence upon high offenders.

As to Abiathar, who had before joined Adonijah, and was no stranger to the more recent intrigue, he had shared the fate of Joab, if the king had not been mindful of his early and long-continued attachment to David, and respected the sacred character he bore. He was commanded to withdraw to his estate in Anathoth, and no longer presume to exercise his sacerdotal functions. Thus was the house of Eli finally degraded in the person of Abiathar, and the house of Eleazer completely restored in the person of Zadok.

This affair reminded Solomon of the necessity of keeping watch over another disaffected person, Shimei, as counselled by David. He therefore ordered him to fix his residence in Jerusalem, which he engaged him by oath not to leave, forewarning him that the breach of this engagement would be at the expense of his life. Of this, Shimei was properly mindful for two years; but then he was induced to leave the city, and went as far as Gath (a suspicious quarter) in pursuit of two runaway slaves. He was, therefore, on his return, consigned to the sword of Benaiah.

By the removal of these dangerous persons, Solomon felt his throne secured to him. He then sought an alliance worthy of the rank to which his kingdom had attained. The nearest power, from an alliance with which even he might derive honour, was that of Egypt. He therefore demanded and received the daughter of the reigning Pharaoh in marriage. Of this princess the annexed figure* is supposed by Rosselini to be a portrait, as it more certainly is of *a* daughter of a king who reigned about the time of Solomon. His new spouse was received by the king of Israel with great magnificence, and was lodged in " the city of David," until the new and splendid palace, which he had already commenced, should be completed. That Solomon should thus contract an alliance, on equal terms, with the reigning family of that great nation which had formerly held the Israelites in bondage, was, in the ordinary point of view, a great thing for him, and shows the relative importance into which the Hebrew king-



[Pharaoh's Daughter.]

* We do not suppose it a very " striking likeness." It may be taken in evidence that the Egyptian artists did not excel in discriminating the characteristics of *feminine* beauty. The features seem, in this and other instances, to be so strongly marked and masculine, that but for the dress, the ear-rings, and the painted eyes, one could not be sure it was intended for a woman. But

dom had now risen. The king is in no part of Scripture blamed for this alliance, even in places where it seems unlikely that blame would have been spared had he been considered blameworthy; and as we know that the Egyptians were idolaters, this absence of blame may intimate that Solomon stipulated that the Egyptian princess should abandon the worship of her own gods, and conform to the Jewish law. This at least was what would be required by the law of Moses, which the king was not likely (at least, at this time of his life) to neglect. Nor need we suppose that the royal family of Egypt would make much difficulty in this; for, *except among the Israelites*, the religion of a woman has never in the East been considered of much consequence.

Solomon, soon after, sought by his example to restore the proper order of public worship. At Gibeon was the tabernacle and altar of Moses, and there, notwithstanding the absence of the ark, the symbol of the Divine presence, the Shechinah, still abode. This therefore was according to the law the only proper seat of public worship, and the place to which the tribes should resort to render homage to the Great King. Therefore, at one of the religious festivals, the king repaired to Gibeon, accompanied by all his court, the officers of his army, and the chiefs and elders of his people, with a vast multitude of the people. There, in the midst of all the state and ceremony of the holy solemnities, the king presented, to be offered on the brazen altar, a thousand beasts, as a holocaust. This solemn act of homage from the young king was acceptable to God, who, in the following night manifested himself to him in a dream, and promised to satisfy whatever wish he might then form. Instead of expressing the usual desires which animate kings, as well as others, for wealth, and glory, and length of days,—Solomon expressed his sense of the difficulties, to one so young, of the high station to which he had been called; and, humbly conscious of his lack of the experience required to conduct well the affairs of his large empire and numerous people, he prayed for wisdom—nothing but wisdom:—"I am but a youth: I know not how to go or to come in.* And thy servant is in the midst of thy people, whom thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give, therefore, thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and evil: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?" This request which Solomon had made was highly pleasing to God. That which he *had* asked was promised to him, in abounding measure—wisdom, such as none before him had ever possessed, or should possess in future times: and since he had made so excellent a choice, that which he *had not* asked should also be given to him—riches and honours beyond all the kings of his time, and, besides this, length of days, if he continued in obedience. Solomon awoke; and feeling within himself that illumination of mind and spirit which assured him that his dream had indeed been oracular and divine, he returned with great joy to Jerusalem.

Soon after this, the discharge of those judicial duties which engage so much of the attention of eastern kings, gave him an opportunity of displaying so much discernment as satisfied the people of his uncommon endowments, and his eminent qualifications for his high place. This was his celebrated judgment between the two harlots who both claimed a living child, and both disclaimed one that had died; in which he discovered the rightful owner of the living child by calling forth that self-denying tenderness which always reigns in a mother's heart.† This produced the very best effect among all the people; for generally nothing is better understood and appreciated, popularly, than an acute and able judicial decision of some difficult point in a case easily understood, and by which the sympathies are much engaged.

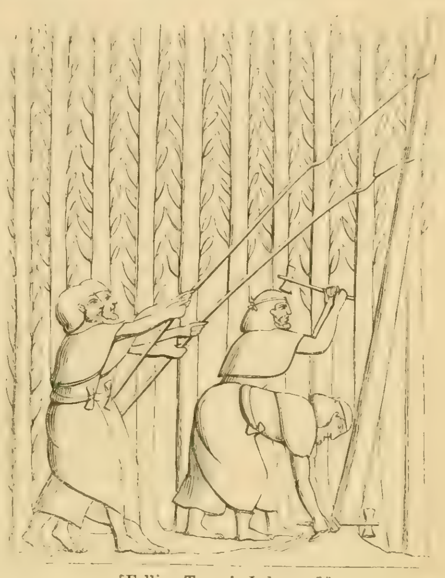
The preparations for the temple had from the first engaged the attention of Solomon. Among the first who sent to congratulate him on his succession was Hiram, king of Tyre, who has already been named as an attached friend and ally of David. The value of the friendship offered by this monarch was fully appreciated by Solomon, who returned the embassy with a

there is reason to suspect, with the Egyptians, as among the Jews themselves, the women had generally strongly-marked and somewhat masculine features. This is, in fact, a portrait of the daughter of Shishak, the Egyptian king, who invaded Judea early in the reign of Solomon's son, Rehoboam; from which circumstance, as well as from the distance of time, he is not probably the same king whose daughter Solomon married.

* That is, "I know not how to conduct affairs."

† See the original narrative in 1 Kings iii. 16—28.

letter, in which he opened the noble design he entertained, and solicited the same sort of assistance in the furtherance of it, as the same king had rendered to his father David, when building his palace. Hiram assented with great willingness, and performed the required services with such fidelity and zeal, as laid the foundation of a lasting friendship between the kings, and to the formation of other mutually beneficial connections between them. The forests of the Lebanon mountains only could supply the timber required for this great work. Such of these forests as lay nearest the sea were in the possession of the Phœnicians; among whom timber was in such constant demand, that they had acquired great and acknowledged skill in the felling and transportation thereof, and hence it was of much importance that Hiram consented to employ large bodies of men in Lebanon to hew timber, as well as others to perform the service of bringing it down to the sea-side, whence it was to be taken along the coast in floats to the port of Joppa, from which place it could be easily taken across the country to Jerusalem. This portion of the assistance rendered by Hiram was of the utmost value and importance. If he had declined Solomon's proposals, all else that he wanted might have been obtained from Egypt. But that country was so far from being able to supply timber, that it wanted it more than almost any nation.



[Felling Trees in Lebanon.]*

Solomon also desired that Phœnician artificers of all descriptions should be sent to Jerusalem, particularly such as excelled in the arts of design, and in the working of gold, silver, and other metals, as well as precious stones; nor was he insensible of the value and beauty of those scarlet, purple, and other fine dyes, in the preparation and application of which the Tyrians excelled. Men skilled in all these branches of art were largely supplied by Hiram. He sent also a person of his own name, a Tyrian by birth, who seems to have been a second Bezaleel; for his abilities were so great, and his attainments so extensive and various, that he was skilled not only in the working of metals, but in all kinds of works in wood and stone, and even in embroidery, in tapestry, in dyes, and the manufacture of all sorts of fine cloth. And not only this, but his general attainments in art, and his inventive powers, enabled him to devise the means of executing, and to execute, whatever work in art might be proposed to him. This man was a treasure to Solomon, who made him overseer not only of the men whom the king of Tyre now sent, but of his own workmen, and those whom David had formerly engaged and retained in his employment.

In return for all these advantages, Solomon engaged on his part, to furnish the king of Tyre yearly with 2500 quarters† of wheat, and 150,000 gallons‡ of pure olive oil, for his own use; besides furnishing the men employed in Lebanon with the same corn quantities, respectively, of wheat and barley, and the same liquid quantities of wine and oil.§

Josephus informs us that the correspondence on this subject between Solomon and Hiram,

* This little cut is, in our view, of very much interest. It is from the Egyptian antiquities; from a large piece of sculpture representing an invasion of Lebanon by an Egyptian king. The inhabitants are seen (as in the engraving) felling trees to form intrenchments against the enemy. The cut, therefore, actually represents the mode in which trees were felled *in Lebanon*, and gives the costume and physiognomy (always carefully preserved by the artists of Egypt) of the inhabitants of Lebanon in Scriptural times.

† In the original, 20,000 *corim;* and as the *core* appears to have been about equal to one of our bushels, this gives the result in the text.

‡ Twenty thousand baths, of seven and a half gallons each.

§ This explanation of the *separate* quantities to Hiram "for his household," and for the workmen in Lebanon, obviates the apparent discrepancy between the statements in 1 Kings v. 11, and 2 Chron. ii. 10; and is that which Kimchi, Ralbag, and other good Jewish authorities furnish.

copies of which are given by him as well as in the books of Kings and Chronicles, were in his time still preserved in the archives of Tyre.*

Solomon, who certainly had a strong leaning towards arbitrary power, being still in want of labourers, ventured to raise a levy of 30,000 Israelites, whom he sent to assist the Phœnician timber-cutters in Lebanon,—not all at once, but in alternate bands of 10,000 each, so that each band returned home and rested two months out of three. This relief, and the sacred object of the service, probably prevented the opposition which the king might otherwise have experienced. For the more onerous labour in the quarries, Solomon called out the remnant of the Canaanites, probably with those foreigners (or their sons) who had been brought into the country as prisoners or slaves during the wars of David, who had, indeed, left an enumeration of all of them (adult males) for this very purpose. Their number was 153,600: according to the common custom of the East in such cases, these no doubt laboured in alternate bands, an instance of which has just been given, and as such service is usually required from persons in their condition, when any great public work is in progress, this measure was doubtless considered less arbitrary, and gave occasion to less discontent, than *we*, with our notions, might be



[Modes of bearing Burdens.]

disposed to imagine. Of these "strangers," 70,000 were appointed to act as porters to the others, and to the Phœnician artisans, in bearing burdens, doubtless after the modes shown (from Egyptian sources) in the annexed engraving. They also probably had the heavy duty of transporting to Jerusalem the large stones, which 60,000 more of them were employed in hewing and squaring in the quarries. Of these the stones intended for the foundation were in immense blocks; and, as well as the rest, were probably brought from no great distance, as quarries of very suitable stone are abundant in the neighbourhood. The stones were squared in the quarry to facilitate their removal. It has been a question how such vast blocks of stone as we see in some ancient buildings were brought to their destination. Satisfaction on this point is afforded by the annexed engraving, which shows how this was managed by the



[Egyptian mode of Transporting Large Stones.]

Egyptians, and, doubtless, by the Israelites and others. The string of cattle was prolonged as the weight to be drawn on the sledge required. The remaining 3300 of these strangers were employed as overseers of the rest, and were, in their turn, accountable to superior Israelite officers.

Not only were the stones squared and fitted in the quarry, but the timber was shaped for its use, and every other article fitted and finished before it was brought to Jerusalem; so that, at last, when the edifice began to be reared with the materials thus carefully prepared,—

> "No workman's steel, no pond'rous axes rung
> Like some tall palm the noiseless fabric sprung."—Heber.

* Antiq. viii. 2, 8.

Three years were spent in these preparations; but, at last, all was ready, and the foundation of this famous temple was laid in the fourth year of Solomon's reign (1027 B.C.), in the second month, and finished in the eleventh year and eighth month, being a space of seven years and six months.

The very great difference between the various plans and views of this temple which different authorities have offered, quite sufficiently intimates the difficulty which has been experienced in connecting together the several descriptive details which the Scriptures afford, in such a manner as to obtain a complete idea of the whole fabric. Warned by the manifest failure of his predecessors, the author of the present work was led to entertain the notion, and to declare it in the 'Pictorial Bible,' that the contemporary architecture of their renowned neighbours, the Egyptians—which we know to have had an extensive influence in much remoter lands—could hardly fail to have operated upon the style and plan of their first and only temple. We therefore suggested, that in an Egyptian temple we were likely to discover a much nearer approximation to the temple at Jerusalem than is now obtainable from any other source. We have since had the very great satisfaction of finding that an architect, Mr. Bardwell, was about the same time led to very similar conclusions. It had been a matter of much regret to us that no regularly educated architect had turned his attention to the subject; as it must be evident that such a person was more likely than any unprofessional student to combine the architectural details of the Scriptural account, so as to form the collective image which they were intended to exhibit. We shall gratify and instruct our readers by transcribing the whole of this, the only professional estimate of Solomon's Temple which, we believe, has ever been given. We make no alterations, but have added a few explanatory notes where we think Mr. Bardwell has been in error :—

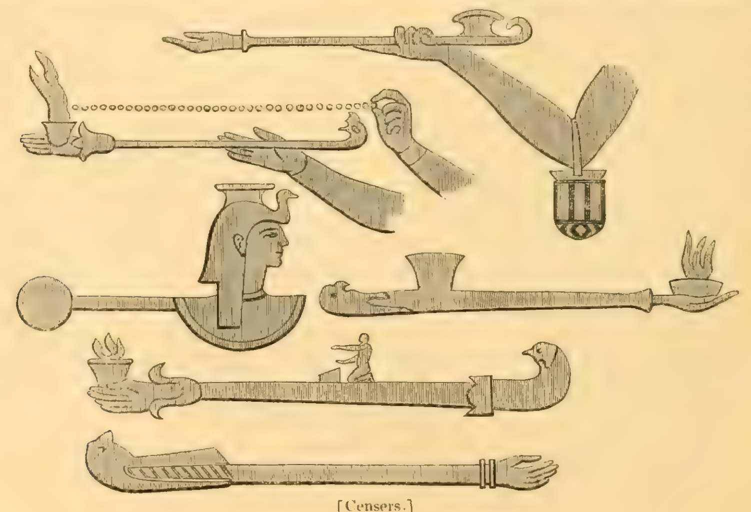
"With so much information before us at the present day, it is almost needless for me to assert that the Temple of Solomon was in the Egyptian style of architecture: a moment's reflection will convince every unbiassed mind that such must have been the case; since, although Greece had been colonised from Egypt nearly 200 years before this, it is not at all likely, from the slow development of human improvement, that the style we call Greek had then superseded its Egyptian parent; and what is conclusive upon this point, as we shall soon see, is, the Temple of Solomon had not, in its proportions and details, anything in common with the temples of Greece. That the Jews had no peculiar style of their own, excepting so far as they were restricted from the use of figures of animals in decoration, is also probable, as, ever since they had settled in Canaan, 400 years previous, they had been constantly engaged in the wars necessary to extend and conserve their newly-acquired territory, and, consequently, had no opportunity of cultivating the fine arts. Besides, Solomon was in constant intercourse with the Pharaoh of his age, and married his daughter (see her portrait in Rosselini, recently discovered).* Further, in no part of the world had temple architecture and the art of cutting and polishing stones ever arrived, before or since, to such perfection as in Egypt. The building of the Temple of Solomon, also, was not entered upon hastily; on the contrary, the architect, from the Egyptian colony of Tyre, had sent in his plans to King David years before the building was commenced [?]; these plans that much honoured man carefully delivered to Solomon, with a schedule of the materials which he had collected for this his ardently desired work. The architect, therefore, having had plenty of time to perfect his plan, naturally made his design from the best existing examples, the temples of his 'father land.' The Tyrians, being at that time the great common carriers of the world, kept up an extensive commerce with Egypt, I therefore infer from this and the before-mentioned reasons, that the masons were Egyptian, and the stone-polished granite,† all prepared, fitted, and finished before it was brought to Jerusalem, since, moreover, there is nothing mentioned about the expensiveness of any article but the stone, 'costly stones, even great stones, stones of ten cubits and stones of eight cubits.'‡

* The same which we have given a few pages back: see the observations there made.

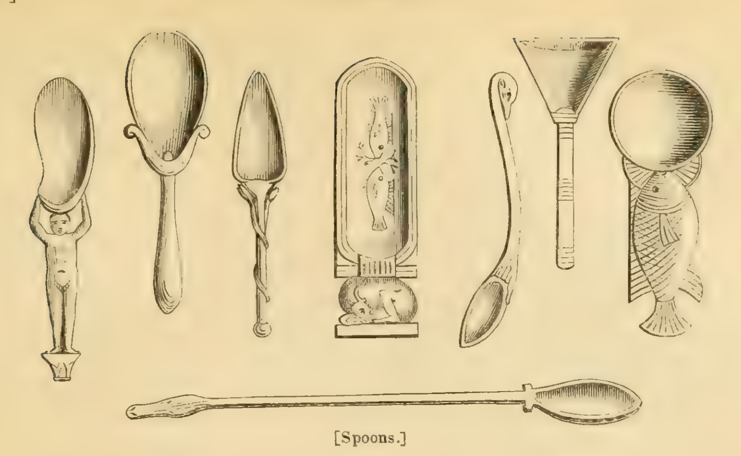
† It could not be granite, which, as the reader knows, is not obtainable nearer than the Sinai mountains. See chap. III. of the Physical History. It was probably limestone; at least we know not of any other that can be deemed sufficiently accessible for this use.

‡ "The temple cubit was twenty-three and a half inches according to Sir Isaac Newton."

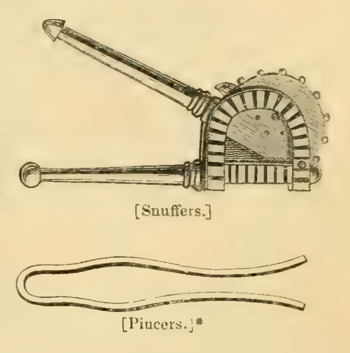
"The cella of the temple of Solomon, as described in the first book of Kings, was small, as all those of the Egyptian temples were, of few parts, but those noble and harmonious. It was about the same length, but not so wide, as St. Paul, Covent Garden: this church is a double square inside, the temple was a treble square, but one square was divided off for the oracle, and geometrical proportions thus established. It was one hundred and sixteen feet three inches long, to which must be added the pronaos, in the same way as that of St. Paul, Covent Garden, nineteen feet four inches and a half more; giving a total length of one hundred and thirty-five feet seven inches and a half long, by thirty-seven feet six inches broad, and fifty-eight feet one inch and a half high. It was surrounded on three sides by chambers in three stories, each story wider than the one below it, as the walls were narrowed, or made thinner, as they ascended, by sets-off of eleven inches on each side, which received the flooring-joists, 'as no cutting was on any account permitted.' Access to these apartments was given from the right-hand side of the interior of the temple, by a winding staircase of stone, such as may be seen in several of the ancient Nubian temples. A row of loop-hole windows above the chambers gave light to the cella. The oracle was an exact square, of thirty-seven feet six inches, divided from the rest of the temple by a partition of cedar, thirty-seven feet six inches high, in the centre of which was a pair of folding-doors of olive-wood, seven feet six inches wide, very richly carved, with palm-trees and open flowers and cherubim; the floor of the temple was boarded with fir, the roof was flat, covered with gold, upon thick planks of cedar, supported by large cedar-beams. The inside walls and the ceiling were lined with cedar, beautifully carved, representing cherubim and palm-trees, clusters of foliage and open flowers, among which the lotus was conspicuous; and the whole interior was overlaid with gold, so that neither wood nor stone was seen, and nothing met the eye but pure gold, either plain as on the floor, or richly chased, and enriched with the gems they had brought from Egypt at the exodus, upon the walls and ceiling. At a little distance from 'the most holy place,' like the railing of a communion-table, were fixed five massive gold candelabra, on each side the entrance, and between the candelabra were chains or wreaths of flowers, wrought in pure gold, separating even the entrance of the oracle from the body of the temple. Within the oracle was set the ancient 'ark of the covenant,' which had preceded them to the Promised Land, beneath two colossal cherubim, each nineteen feet four inches and a half high, with immense out spreadwings, one wing of each cherubim touching the other in the middle of the temple, while the other wings touched the wall on each side; before them was the altar of incense, formed of cedar, and entirely overlaid with refined gold; and on the sides of the temple were arranged ten golden tables, five on each side, for the exhibition of the shew-bread, besides other tables of silver, for the display of above one hundred gold vases of various patterns, and the censers, spoons, snuffers, &c., used in the service of the temple. It appears



[Censers.]



[Spoons.]



[Snuffers.]

[Pincers.]*

that the inside of the pronaos was also covered with gold; from it a grand pair of folding-doors nine feet four inches and a half wide opened into the temple. These doors were also overlaid with gold, embossed in rich patterns of cherubim, and knops and open flowers; both pairs of doors had ornamented hinges of gold, and before the doors of the oracle hung a veil embroidered with cherubim, in blue and purple and crimson.

"Hiram, the architect (who was also a king),† had sent over from Tyre his clerk of the works, who superintended the building till it became necessary to set up the two great columns of the pronaos; these were of the usual proportions of Egyptian columns, being five and a half diameters high, and as these gave the great characteristic feature to the building, Solomon sent an embassy to fetch the architect from Tyre to superintend the moulding and casting of these columns, which were intended to be of brass; and observe how conspicuous is the idea of the vase (the *bowl* of our translation) rising from a cylinder ornamented with lotus flowers; the bottom of the vase was partly hidden by the flowers, the belly of it was overlaid with net-work, ornamented by seven wreaths, the Hebrew number of happiness, and beneath the lip of the vase were two rows of *pomegranates*, one hundred in each row; these superb pillars were eight feet diameter, and forty-four feet high, supporting a noble entablature fourteen feet high.

"The temple was surrounded on the north, south, and east, by the inner or priest's court, which had a triple colonnade around it; and before the western front was the great court, square and very spacious, having in the midst the great brazen altar, as wide as the front of the temple itself, viz., thirty-seven feet six inches square; it contained also the magnificent basin, called the 'molten sea,' besides ten other lavatories, all of splendid workmanship in brass, for our architect appears to have been a first-rate artist, both in designing and executing, and his materials and talents to have been inadequately rewarded even by the donation of twenty cities.‡ The great court had three propylea, with gates of brass, and was surrounded also with a triple colonnade. Solomon placed his palace, in imitation of the Egyptian kings, adjoining the temple; and like them, also assumed the sacerdotal office,

* All these subjects are derived from Egyptian sources, mostly from actual specimens in the British Museum. The "snuffers" are very curious; the "pincers" are added because something very similar in shape is much used for trimming lamps in the East.

† That Hiram was a king we know; but that he was an architect, is known only to the free-masons. The reader will perceive, throughout this extract, much masonic phraseology, and some historical *facts* for which there is no authority beyond the masonic archives, and that authority men of letters have not yet learned to respect. It is a pity that this really valuable passage should be so disfigured; but we have only interfered when a fact with which our own history has concern appears to be misunderstood. Mr. Bardwell seems a better architect than historian.

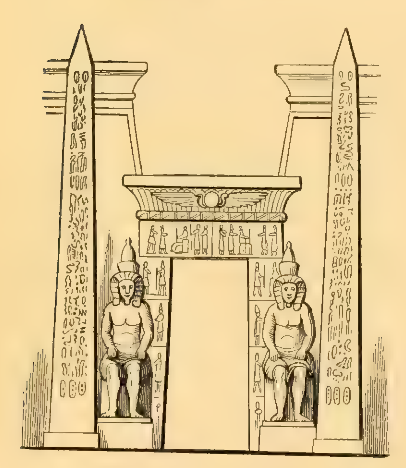
‡ All this, about *king* Hiram's operations, as distinguished from those of his "clerk of works," is very odd, and we do not recommend our readers to receive it as historical verity.

presiding at the consecration of the temple, preaching to the people, and offering the dedicatory prayer. Magnificent must have been the sight, to see the young king, clothed in royalty, officiating as priest before the immense altar,* while the thousands of Levites and priests, on the east side, habited in surplices, with harps, cymbals, and trumpets in their hands, led the eye to the beautiful pillars flanking the doors of the temple, now thrown open and displaying the interior brilliantly lighted up, while the burnished gold of the floor, the ceiling, and the walls, with the precious gems with which they were enriched, reflecting the light on all sides, would completely overwhelm the imagination, were it not excited by the view of the embroidered veil, to consider the yet more awful glories of the most holy place; and astounding must have been the din of the instruments of the four thousand Levites, led on by the priests, with one hundred and twenty trumpets, directing the choruses of the immense congregation, as they chanted the sublime compositions of the royal Psalmist in the grand intonations of the Hebrew language, like the 'roaring of many waters.' "†

We shall let this stand for a general description of the Temple of Solomon, and shall only add a few observations on some points to which we are willing to give more particular notice than Mr. Bardwell has bestowed.

The Egpytian temple, which this writer regards as the most probable model of that of Solomon, is the one at Dandour, engraved in Gau's 'Nubia,' and the frontispiece of which is also given in Maddox's 'Excursions.' Instead of this we have given, at the head of this chapter, another temple of the same class, in the Isle of Elephantine, and which appears to us equally illustrative.

One of the most valuable points in the description, is that in which, from the example offered in these instances, it is determined that the two famous pillars of brass, to which the names of Jachin and Boaz were given, did not stand detached and apart, as most writers have concluded, but were designed for the useful purpose of supporting the entablature of the pronaos. We subscribe entirely to this although that the other alternative, were it correct, equally illustrated by a reference to Egyptian temples, might be is shown by various instances in which, as in the annexed cut, obelisks are placed immediately in front of temples, at each side of, and at equal distances from the door of entrance.

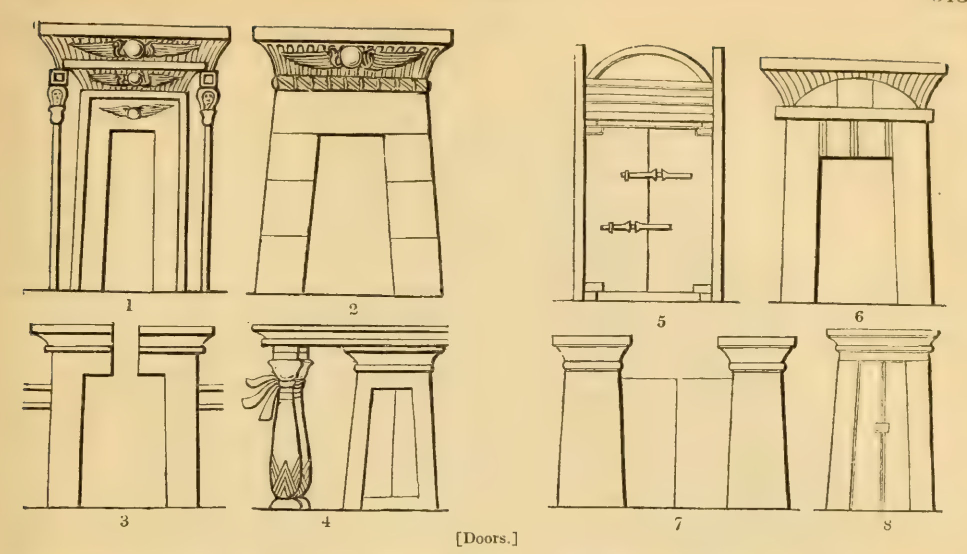


[Obelisks in front of a Temple.]

The DOOR of the temple is so particularly mentioned in all its parts—its valves, its sideposts, and its golden "hinges"—and yet, after all, so little is really distinct to the mind of the form and appearance of this and other doors mentioned in the Scriptures, that we have thought it proper to seek the information which the antiquities of Egypt offer on this particular point, and have selected the following examples of doors of different kinds. These illustrations (see next page) being designed chiefly to illustrate *form*, require little explanation. One of them (4) offers another example of the application of two pillars in front of the door, and the reader will be struck by their correspondence in form to those of Jachin and Boaz. One has been introduced (7) as an example of a gate of an outer enclosure, and such may have been the gates to the courts of the temple. Two of them (5 and 8) show the manner in which doors were fastened; and it may be remarked that, among the ancient Egyptians, doors were fastened and hung in the same manner as they are now in the East, which concurrence precludes any question as

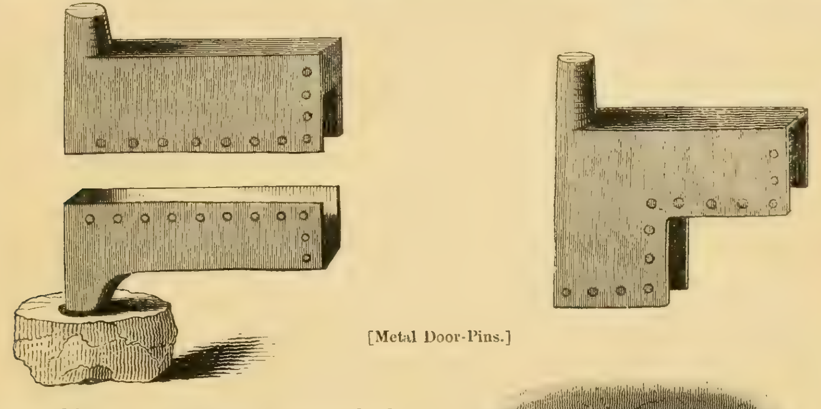
* This is very, very wrong. By the part he took, Solomon assumed no priestly functions. Surely Mr. Bardwell must know how zealously the priesthood was guarded from the interference of even kingly pretensions. Signal and immediate visitations—death, paralysis, or leprosy, failed not to follow such assumption of the priestly functions as is here ascribed to Solomon.

† 'Temples, Ancient and Modern.' By W. Bardwell, Architect. 1837.

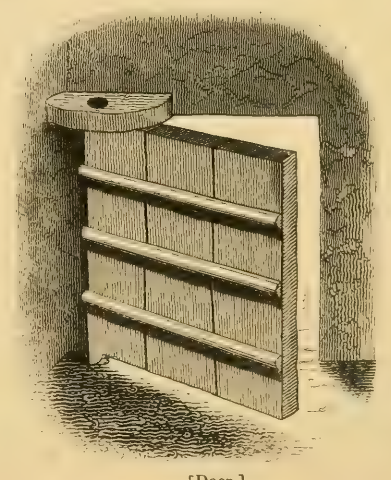


[Doors.]

to the ancient custom of Palestine in this matter. Our own and other translations of the Bible are unquestionably wrong when they speak of the "hinges" of doors. Doors were not in former times, nor are they now, hung by hinges in the East; they turned on pins, which among the Egyptians were frequently of metal (bronze); several of them have been found and

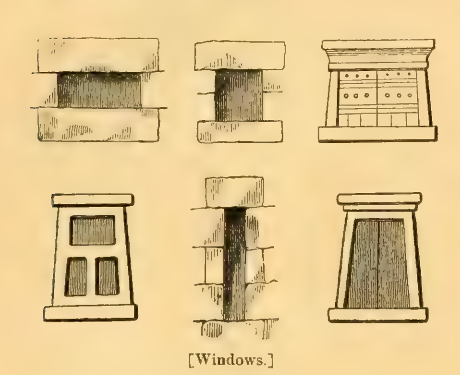

[Metal Door-Pins.]

are preserved in various cabinets; those which our cuts exhibit are in the British Museum. Such doubtless were the golden "hinges" to the door of Solomon's Temple. Sometimes, however, as in the annexed specimen, taken from the model of a small house, preserved in the British Museum, the pin was formed out of projecting ends of the wood which formed the substance of the door. And this is very usual now in the East, where use of harder woods than the Egyptians possessed renders the metal pins less necessary. The pins turned in holes in the lintel and threshold (or in the floor behind the threshold); and it is now common in the ruins of Palestine and Syria to see these holes in stone lintels and


[Door.]

thresholds, in which turned the pins of doors long since destroyed. It will be observed that, as in some of our specimens, the door of the temple had two valves.

It is said that to the temple there were " windows of narrow lights." Or as the margin of our Bibles render, " windows broad within and narrow without, or skewed and closed." The passage is difficult ;* and Boothroyd follows Michaelis and Dathe in translating, " windows that might be closed." The annexed specimens of ancient Eyptian windows illustrate all the suggested alternatives. The form of the temple window is doubtless among them; and the others may illustrate the different windows mentioned in the Scripture. One of Solomon's subsequent buildings—his country palace, called " the house of the forest of Lebanon " (probably on account of the plantations with which it was surrounded)—had three rows of square windows, in which light was opposite to light, on the different sides of the building.†



[Windows.]

As the utensils for the sacred service were similar in design and use to those in the tabernacle of Moses, which have received due attention, it is not necessary to enter into details respecting those which Solomon provided for his temple. It may suffice to mention that, seeing it was designed that the sacred services should be conducted on a larger and more splendid scale than in former times, the instruments of service were proportionately larger, or more splendid, or more numerous. The most remarkable of the new utensils was " the molten sea," which was destined to occupy the place of " the brazen laver " of the old tabernacle. It was cast of fine brass, a hand's breadth thick, and its border was wrought " like the brim of a cup with lotus flowers." It was so large as to contain about 15,000 gallons of water.‡ It was mounted on twelve brazen oxen, which must have given it a very imposing appearance. The instance proves, by the bye, as do the figures of cherubim so profusely displayed in all parts of the temple, and the brazen serpent in the wilderness, that the Hebrews were not forbidden to make images of living creatures, so that they were not designed for any idolatrous or superstitious object.§ Had it been otherwise, nothing could well have been more suspicious and dangerous than the figures of oxen, considering the addiction of the Israelites to the worship of the ox Apis, as evinced by the golden figure of him which they worshipped in the wilderness, and by those which were ultimately set up in Dan and Bethel. We are not acquainted with the precise form of this famous laver; instead, therefore, of giving any merely conjectural or fanciful illustration, we introduce the most approximate *reality* which can be found. This is offered by the Fountain of the Lions, in one of the courts (the Court of the Lions) of that noble Arabian palace in Granada, which bears the name of Alhambra. This fountain is said to have been designed in imitation of Solomon's " molten sea." The difference of the animals (lions, not oxen), and the absence of any allusion to Solomon in the copious Arabic inscription with which it is charged, renders this doubtful. We are rather disposed to regard it as an undesigned though curious Oriental coincidence with the laver of the Hebrew king. It is remarkable that *lions*, as well as oxen and cherubim, were figured on the base of the smaller lavers which stood in the same (the inner) court of the temple with the large one.

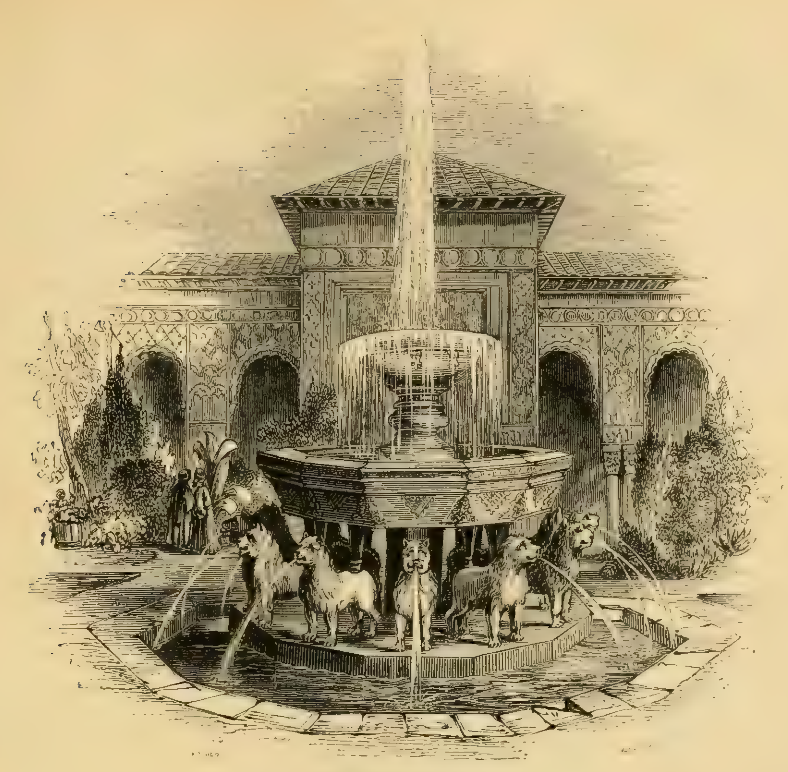
As the priests and Levites were immediately, on the completion of the temple, subjected to

* שקפים אטמים Literally, apertas clausas,—" open shut."

† 1 Kings, vii. 4, 5.

‡ That is, 2000 *baths*, of a trifle more than seven gallons and a half. A very great capacity certainly; so great, that old cavillers were wont to refer to it as one of the incredibilities of the Scripture history. Now when the *smallest* vats in our great breweries are of about the same capacity, and the *largest* eight times greater, wonder is much lessened and incredulity ceases.

§ This indeed is clear enough in the terms of the prohibition, which is, " Thou shalt not make them—*to worship them.*" In later days, however, when the Jews began to refine upon the law, they understood the prohibition in the absolute and unconditional sense.



[Fountain of the Lions.]

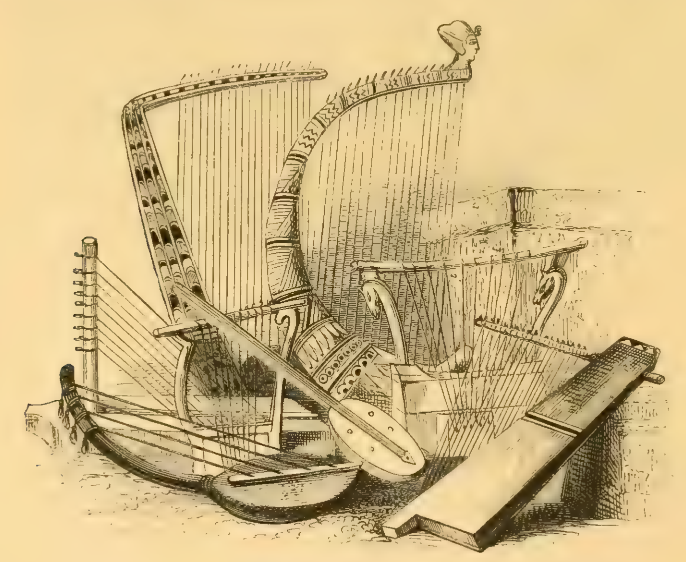
the regulations of David, which ever after continued in force,—this is the proper place to take some notice of these rules. Some alterations in previous arrangements would have been very proper even without reference to the temple ; for the numbers of the Levites had so increased, and their labours in the Land of Promise had become so light, that it could not be easy for all of them to find occupation in their proper duties.

As a preliminary measure, David had caused the tribe of Levi to be numbered, and it was found to contain 38,000 males above thirty years of age. It seems that he designed their services to commence at that age when he ordered the census to be taken; but afterwards saw occasion to ordain that at least their easier services should commence at twenty. Of the 38,000, David directed that 24,000 should be assigned as assistants to the priests in the service of the temple—not, of course, all at once, but in alternate weekly courses of 1000 each. Of these some of the highest rank had charge of the sacred treasures. Others, apparently of lower rank, attended the priests in all their services at the altar, especially in preparing the victims designed for offerings; and some had special charge of preparing the shew-bread and unleavened cakes, with the proper quantity of flour, for the morning and evening service. " From the text (1 Chron. xxiii. 29), it is inferred that these had in their custody, within the sanctuary, the original standard for weights and measures, liquid and dry. Hence we often read in Scripture of the shekel of the sanctuary,—not that there were two sorts of shekels, one sacred and another civil, as some have supposed, but because weights and measures, being reckoned among the sacred things, were kept in the sanctuary, as they were in the temples of the pagans, and afterwards in Christian churches."*

Of the remaining 14,000, there were 4000 divided into twenty-four courses like the others, appointed to act as porters and guards of the temple. It seems that on this class devolved also the duty of seeing the buildings kept neat and clean.

* Horne, iii. 273.

The same number (4000), similarly divided, were to act as musicians in the temple. This was quite a new part of the service; for previously there had been nothing of music in the Hebrew service, save the occasional blowing of trumpets. We may well believe that this was a matter in which so eminent a musician and poet as David himself took much interest. In fact he had, on a smaller scale, already introduced a musical service at the tabernacle. He not only caused the musical instruments for this service to be made under his own cognisance, but collected and composed the psalms of thanksgiving and of prayer which were to be employed in this part of the temple worship. Of these we have already had occasion to speak. Part of this service was vocal. With respect to the musical instruments, all the various instruments which were in use among the Hebrews are, on different occasions, named in connection with the services of the temple. There is some difficulty in identifying the *stringed* instruments thus named, but not the others. Such information as we have been able to obtain concerning the *stringed* instruments has been given in a former work,† and we are not disposed to repeat it in this place. As, however, there is every reason to conclude that the instruments in use among them were such as the Egyptians also possessed, we here introduce



[Egyptian Stringed Instruments.]

a representation of those belonging to the last-named people. As our attention is limited to the regulations made by David and enforced by Solomon, we abstain from any larger notice of the music and psalmody of the Levitical service. In this as in all the other divisions of service, there were some who were chiefs or overseers. The persons of the musical order who, from their superior abilities, had the superintendence of all the others, were Heman and Asaph, of the line of Gershon, and Jeduthun of the line of Merari. Their names often occur in the titles of the Psalms, which were sent to them as composed by David, for the musical service.

The remaining 6000 Levites were distributed throughout the country as judges and genealogists. They also appear to have instructed the people in the Law of Moses, by expounding the several parts of it, in the places where they resided; and that they kept the public records and genealogies of the respective tribes, is generally understood by the Jews.

Doubtless, in apportioning to the Levites their lines of duty, regard was had to their various abilities and attainments. It will be observed that the distribution of this great body into bands, which performed duty in rotation, left by far the greater part of their time free from their proper Levitical duties. We find numerous instances in Scripture that this leisure was

* The 'Pictorial Bible,' Notes on Psalm xliii., xcii., cviii.

much employed in the service of the state. It was indeed obvious and natural, that men of such superior education and attainments, and whose residences were dispersed over the country, should take an influential position in their respective localities, and that they should be much employed as the agents and officers of the general government in their own districts. But we must refer the reader to what has already been said of the Levites as a class, in the fifth chapter of this work (p. 287).

The PRIESTS having increased in full proportion to the Levites, were, in like manner, divided into twenty-four classes, each of which officiated a week alternately. Sixteen of these classes were of the family of Eleazer, and eight of the family of Ithamar. They succeeded one another on the Sabbath-day, until they had all attended in their turn. Each class had its own chief or president, whom some writers suppose to be the same as "the chief-priests" so often mentioned in the New Testament, and in the writings of Josephus. For although only four of the classes returned from the Babylonish captivity, these were subdivided into the original number of twenty-four, to which the original names were given. The chief person of each class appointed an entire family to offer the sacrifices, and at the close of their week they all joined together in sacrificing. As each family latterly contained a great number of priests, they drew lots for the different offices which they were to perform.*

This is all that seems to belong to or to result from the regulations made by David; and the general character and duties of the priesthood have already received all the attention we can bestow.†

The part taken by David and other kings in ordering "the house of God," and even of appointing and deposing the high-priest, might seem very extraordinary at the first view. But it will be recollected that, according to the theory of the constitution, the kings were the specially appointed vicegerents of Jehovah, which necessarily gave them a general power of control superior to any other. It is seen, however, that the regulations which were made rescinded no law of Moses, nor interfered with any positive enactment. But the king, from his position as *vicegerent* of Jehovah, was superior, even in his relation to God, to the high-priest, who was only Jehovah's *minister:* and while the law made no express provision on the subject, it was certainly a matter of policy that the appointment of so important and influential an officer in the state should be retained by the crown. It was obvious, nevertheless, that no high-priest could be legally appointed, but from the family to which that dignity had been originally assigned.

The temple, with all things destined for its service, and every arrangement connected with it, being completed in seven years, its dedication was celebrated the year after, with a magnificence worthy of the object and the occasion. All the chief men in Israel were present—the heads of tribes, and paternal chiefs, together with multitudes of people from all parts of the land. The priests, if not the Levites, also attended in full force, the succession of the courses being *afterwards* to commence. God himself was pleased to manifest his presence and his complacency by two striking miracles:—

At the moment when the ark of the covenant, having been brought in high procession from its former place in "the city of David," was deposited in the Holy of Holies, the numerous Levitical choirs thundered forth their well-known song,—sent to the heavens by their united voices, and by the harmonious concord of a thousand instruments:—"Praise Jehovah! for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever!"—Suddenly, as at the consecration of the first tabernacle, the house of God was covered with a thick cloud, which filled it, and which enveloped all the assistants in such profound obscurity that the priests were unable to continue their services. This was a manifest symbol that God had accepted this as his house, his palace, and that his Presence had entered to inhabit there. It was so understood by Solomon, whose voice rose amidst the silence which ensued. "Jehovah said that he would dwell in the thick darkness. I have assuredly built for thee a house to dwell in, a settled place for thee to

* This explains Luke i. 9. † See the chapter on the Law, pp. 230-241.

abide in for ever!" The king stood on a brazen platform which had been erected in front of the altar; and now, turning to the people, he explained the origin and object of this building. After which "he spread forth his hands towards the heavens" to address himself to God. The prayer he offered on this occasion is one of the noblest and most sublime compositions in the Bible. It exhibits the most exalted conceptions of the omnipresence of God, and of his superintending providence; and dwells more especially on his peculiar protection of the Hebrew nation, from the time of its departure from Egypt, and imploring pardon and forgiveness for all their sins and transgressions in the land, and during those ensuing captivities which, in the same prophetic spirit that animated the last address of Moses, he appears to have forseen. Nothing can be finer than that part of his long and beautiful address, in which, recurring to the idea of *inhabitance*, which had been so forcibly brought before his mind, he cries—"But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold the heaven, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded!"

The king had no sooner concluded his prayer than a fire from the heavens descended upon the altar and consumed the burnt offerings. All the Israelites beheld this prodigy, and bent their faces towards the earth in adoration, and repeated with one voice the praise which was the most acceptable to him:—"He is good: His mercy endureth for ever!"

By these two signs the sanctuary and the altar received the same acceptance and consecration which had been granted in the wilderness to the tabernacle and the altar there.

After this, the sacrifices were resumed, and countless victims were offered. During two consecutive weeks the people celebrated this great solemnity with unabated zeal. It was the year of jubilee, which had probably been chosen, as a season of general joy and leisure; and hence the unusually great concourse to Jerusalem. In this year the jubilee feast was followed by that of tabernacles, which explains the duration of this great festival, beyond the seven days in which public festivals usually terminated. On the last day of the second feast the king blessed the people, and dismissed them to their homes, to which they repaired, "joyful and glad of heart for all the good which Jehovah had done for David his servant, and for Israel his people."

Solomon having thus worthily accomplished the obligation imposed upon him by his father, felt himself at liberty to build various sumptuous structures, and undertake various works suited to the honour of his crown and the dignity of his great kingdom. All that can be said with reference to these will be little more than an amplification of his own statement on the subject:—"I raised magnificent works; I built for myself houses; I planted for myself vineyards; I made for myself gardens and groves, and planted in them fruit-trees of every kind; I made also pools of water, to water therewith the growing plantations. I bought men-servants and women-servants, and had servants born in my house; I possessed also herds and flocks in abundance, more than any had before me in Jerusalem; I collected also silver and gold, and precious treasure from kings and provinces; I procured men-singers and women-singers, and the sweetest instruments of music, the delight of the children of men. Thus I became great, and possessed more than any who had been before me in Jerusalem."*

Of the royal buildings to which allusion is thus made, our more particular information is respecting the palace which the king built for himself, another for "Pharaoh's daughter," and, "the house of the forest of Lebanon." It is difficult, from the brief intimations which the Scriptural history offers, to form a clear or connected idea of these buildings. The description of Josephus, although more precise, does not supply this deficiency; but by its assistance we may make out that the two palaces, for himself and the princess of Egypt, were not separate buildings; but, as the existing arrangements in Oriental palaces would suggest, a distinct part, or wing, of the same building. It may assist the matter to understand that an Oriental palace consists, for the most part, of a series of open quadrangles, with distinct appropriations, and each surrounded with buildings suitable to its appropriation. In fact, they are distinct buildings, connected only by communicating doors, similar in their general plan to

* Eccles. ii. 3—9, Boothroyd's version.



[Women Singers.]

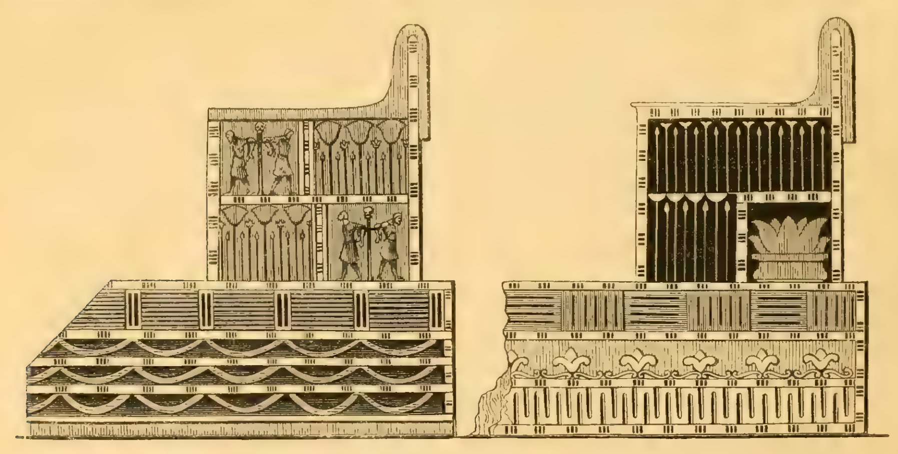
each other, but differing much in size and workmanship. The quadrangle into which the gate of entrance opens, usually contains the state apartments and offices, principally the hall in which the sovereign gives audience, sits in judgment, and transacts all public business. Hence the court is very often called " *the gate*," of which we have a familiar instance in the Ottoman *Porte*, and of which examples are found in Scripture with reference to the courts of the Hebrew, Babylonian, and Persian kings.* Now, from the description of Josephus it would appear that the palace, as a whole, consisted of three quadrangles, of which that in the centre contained the hall of audience and justice, and other state apartments, while that on the right hand formed the king's palace of residence, and that on the left was the palace of the Egyptian princess. The only point on which we are in doubt, is whether the three quadrangles were on a line with each other, or that the one which contained the public halls was in advance of the others; for in this way, equally with the other, the palaces of the king and queen might be respectively described as to the right and left of the public building. There are some who think that " the house of the forest of Lebanon " was the same as this front or public portion of the whole pile; nor should we like absolutely to deny this, although it seems more probable that it was a royal residence in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, deriving its name either from the number of cedar pillars which supported its galleries and halls, or from the plantations by which it was surrounded These structures were, for the most part, built with immense blocks of squared stones; and the whole was fitted up with cedar; while the nobler rooms and galleries were lined with slabs of costly polished marble to the floor, and were above enriched with sculptures (on the wall), and apparently with paintings (on the plaster), especially towards the ceiling, all of which we may conclude to have been very much in the style of similar things among the Egyptians, whose palaces were decorated after the same style. And if we have rightly interpreted Josephus to intimate that there were three ranges of ornaments in the principal rooms,—polished slabs at the bottom, sculpture above, and painting towards the top, it would be very easy to show how the same ideas and distributions are retained in the palaces of the modern East, where, above basement slabs of *looking-*

* 2 Sam. xv. 2; Est. ii. 19, 21; iii. 2, 3; Dan. ii. 49. Compare Matt. xvi. 18; see also Xenop. Cyrop. i. 3; viii. 3.

glass, are wrought recesses, and carvings, and arabesques, and ornaments of stucco (sculpture being interdicted); while towards the ceiling much highly-coloured painting is displayed. If we may credit Josephus, " barbaric pearl and gold " were not wanting among the materials which contributed to the decoration of the more splendid apartments. The historian is at a loss for words to express the full conception, which the traditions of his fathers had conveyed to his mind, of the splendours of Solomon's palatial buildings: " It would be an endless task (he says) to give a particular survey of this mighty mass of building; so many courts and other contrivances; such a variety of chambers and offices, great and small; long and large galleries; vast rooms of state, and others for feasting and entertainment, set out as richly as could be with costly furniture and gildings; besides, that all the service for the king's table were of pure gold. In a word, the whole palace was, in a manner, made up, from the base to the coping, of white marble, cedar, gold, and silver, with precious stones here and there intermingled upon the walls and ceilings."*

As the theory and practice of the government, and, indeed, of most Oriental governments, required the king, as supreme magistrate, to be accessible to the complaints of all his subjects, the place in which Solomon administered justice was in the open *porch* of his palace, therefrom called " the porch of judgment." This was an obvious adaptation of the old, and there still (and even now) subsisting practice of making " the gate " the seat of justice. The judgment porch of Solomon's palace we take to have been a large covered apartment, supported by pillars, and entirely open in front. It was seventy-five feet long by forty-five feet broad. Here, upon a raised platform, to which there was an ascent by steps, was placed the *throne* of Solomon, of which so much notice is taken in the Scriptural description and in that of Josephus;† from which, with the help of particulars preserved by early traditions, we collect that to the raised daïs, or platform, on which the throne rested, there was an ascent by six steps. The balustrade (so to speak) of these steps was formed by the figures of couching lions of gold, twelve in all, being two to each step. The throne itself was of *ivory* (a material which appears to have been unknown in Palestine until the time of Solomon), studded and enriched with gold, and over it was a semi-spherical canopy. Besides the twelve lions on the six steps of ascent, there were two as " stays " on each side of the seat, the back of which appears to have been concave.‡

Now although, for its cost and materials, the like of this throne " had not been made in any kingdom," it is easy to show the correspondence of its general plan and details with those

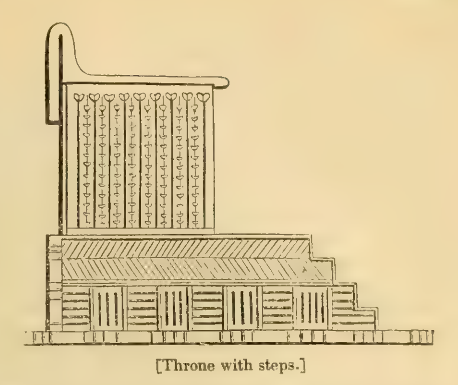


[Egyptian Thrones.]

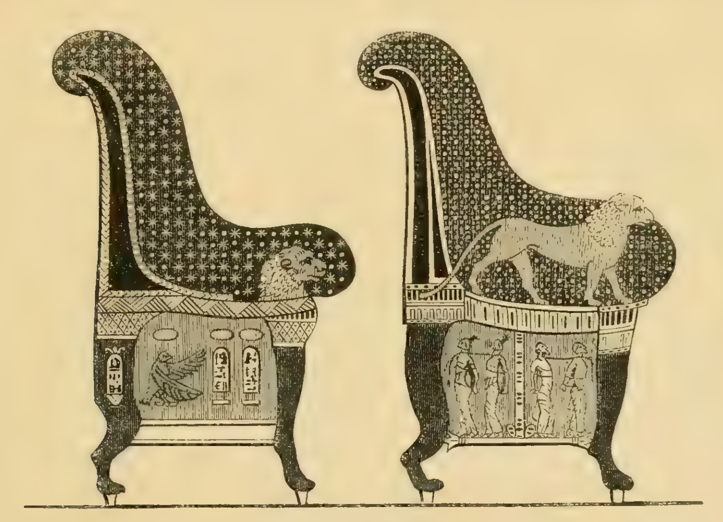
of the *thrones* of the ancient and modern East. The annexed engravings, representing the thrones on which gods and kings are the most usually seated in the Egyptian sculptures,§

* Antiq. viii. 5. 2. † Ibid. ‡ See 1 Kings x. 18—20. § See also the cut at p. 118.

evince that the throne, as a raised platform or dais, was common among that people; and to this dais was usually an ascent by steps. There is another class of Egyptian seats, which in introducing to the reader's notice, not only on account of the illustration which they furnish, but for the sake of the demonstration which they offer of the high pitch to which the arts of domestic civilisation had, at a very early date, attained among the next neighbours (and now friends and allies) of the Israelites. They form the first class of seats among that people, and whether we look to the elegance and convenience of their forms, their exquisite workmanship, or the richness of their materials, it is difficult to say in what they are surpassed by modern art. The illustrative points, with reference to the seat of Solomon's throne, are afforded by the lions, and by the concavity of the back,—points which did not escape the notice of Sir J. G. Wilkinson, as cited below. To which we may add that the frames of



[Throne with steps.]

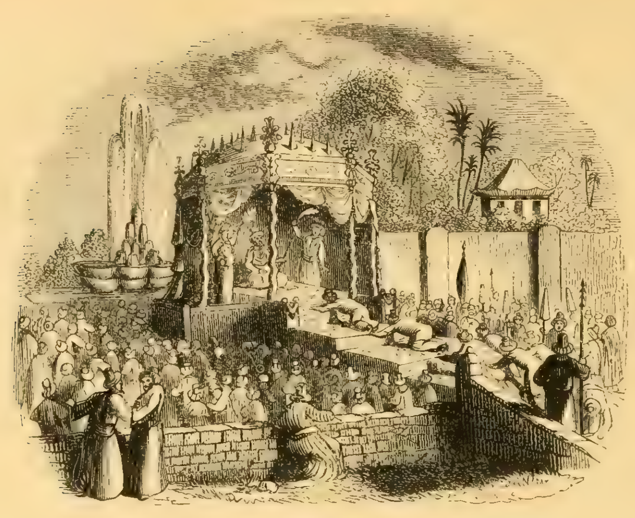


[Egyptian Fauteuils.*]

some of these fauteuils are coloured yellow in the pictures of them in the royal tombs, from which the examples are copied, suggesting that they were overlaid with gold, or, at the least, gilded. The lions are always, and the other ornamental parts are often, coloured yellow, even when the rest is of a different colour, confirming the probability of the intention to represent gold. We cannot dismiss these old Egyptian thrones and seats, without directing notice to the figures of captives, painfully bound, by which some of them are decorated, and will call to the remembrance of the reader the observations which were offered in a preceding page.† One other engraving, representing the Great Mogul of a former age on his throne, conveys the most effective illustration of the subject which can be derived from a modern Oriental source. After the

* Sir J. G. Wilkinson observes with reference to this class of seats, "the back of the chair was equally light and strong. It was occasionally concave, like some Roman chairs, *or the throne of Solomon* (1 Kings x. 19); and in many of the large fauteuils, a lion forms an arm at each side. But the back usually consisted of a single set of upright and cross bars, or of a frame, receding gracefully, and terminating at its summit in a graceful curve, supported from without by perpendicular bars; and over this was thrown a handsome pillow of coloured cotton, painted leather, or gold and silver tissue, like the beds at the feast of Ahasuerus, mentioned in Esther (i. 6.); or like the feather cushions covered with stuffs, and embroidered with silk threads of gold, in the palace of Scaurus."—'Ancient Egyptians,' vol. ii. p. 196.

† See before, p. 390.



[Great Mogul on Throne.]

description which has been given, the points of illustration are too obvious to require particular indication.

On the walls of the hall in which the throne was placed were probably hung the 300 shields of gold (or probably of wood or hide, covered with gold) which the king caused to be made, and which are mentioned among the proudest treasures of the kingdom. There were 200 other shields, of the same costly material, and twice as large, which were for the use of the royal guard; for, as we shall see presently, the state of the king in his court and in his goings forth, was fully commensurate to the magnificence of his palaces.

With commendable zeal, Solomon had hastened the completion of the temple; but he allowed nearly twice the time to be consumed on the palatial structures which have engaged our notice. The temple was finished in seven years; but thirteen years were employed on the palaces; so that it was not until the twentieth year that the whole was completed. But for the erection of the temple, all the means had been provided by David; whereas Solomon had himself to provide for his own buildings. And this probably explains the difference; for that, with all his resources, the king's plans outran his means, is evinced by the fact that besides assistance of the same sort which he had rendered towards the building of the temple, the king of Tyre had, by the time the works were completed, advanced to Solomon not less than 120 talents of gold,* in recompense of which the king of Israel assigned to him twenty towns in the vicinity of the Tyrian territory. He seems, however, to have made the mistake of considering that what was good in the eyes of the Hebrews, must be equally good for the Tyrians, who would doubtless much have preferred an extension of their territory along the coast to this comparatively inland and agricultural district. Hiram, when he came to view the ground, saw at once the unsuitableness, and indicated his dissatisfaction by the name of Cabul which he imposed upon it. Solomon, therefore, took back these towns, and doubtless gave the king of Tyre some more satisfying equivalent; for the transaction was very far from interrupting the good understanding between the two kings.

It was doubtless from the considerations arising from his connection with king Hiram, and from narrowly observing the sources of the extraordinary prosperity enjoyed by the Phœnician state, coupled with the want of adequate means for the execution of the magnificent plans which his mind had formed, that Solomon began to turn his own attention to foreign commerce, as a source of wealth and aggrandisement. We are unacquainted with the particular inducements which Solomon was able to offer to the Phœnicians, who were in this matter

* This, at the usual reckoning of sixteen talents of silver to one of gold, which is therefore equal to 6000*l*., would make 720,000*l*.

proverbially a jealous people, to induce them to afford the benefit of their experience in this enterprise. But it is certain that they furnished the king with ships, such as they employed in their distant voyages westward, and therefore called " ships of Tarshish," and that these ships were manned by Phœnician mariners, and voyaged in company with a fleet of ships belonging to the king of Tyre. That they must have had very cogent reasons for this,—for allowing themselves to be made the instruments of enriching the Hebrew king by traffic with foreign parts—no one who is acquainted with the historical character of that people, or with the commercial character in general, will in the least degree doubt. In seeking the motive by which their proceedings were determined, we must consider the direction of the voyage. In another work * we have exhibited our reasons for concluding that the regions of Tarshish and Ophir lay not in different directions, but were visited in the same voyage; and further that this voyage embraced the southern shores of Arabia, the eastern shores of Africa, and possibly the isle of Ceylon, if not some points in the Indian peninsula. This being the case, we shall perceive that although the Phœnicians had the exclusive command of the *westward* traffic, on the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts, they could have had no share in this *eastern* traffic but on such terms as Solomon might think proper to impose. For he was in possession of the ports of the Elanitic Gulf, and of the intervening country, whereby he held the key of the Red Sea, and could at his pleasure exclude them from that door of access to the Indian Ocean. It is true that there was another door, by the Gulf of Suez; but its ports were in the hands of the Egyptians, who were by no means likely to allow unobstructed access to it. And then, as to the other channel, across the desert to the Euphrates and Persian Gulf, the key of this also was in the hand of Solomon, by virtue of his military stations on the Euphrates, and his complete command of the desert country west of that river. It may thus appear that since the Phœnicians could have no access to the Indian Ocean but with the consent and by the assistance of the Hebrew king, he was in a condition to stipulate for a profitable partnership in the enterprise. Nor perhaps was he so entirely dependant upon the Phœnicians for the execution of his plans, as might at first sight appear: for although the Israelites knew little of maritime affairs, this was not the case with the Edomites, who were now the subjects of Solomon. They had been accustomed to navigate the Red Sea, and probably to some extent beyond; and although we know not that they reached the shores to which, under the abler guidance of the Phœnicians, the fleets of Solomon penetrated, they probably might have been made, with a little encouragement, the instruments of his designs. In preferring the Phœnicians, Solomon was probably influenced, not only by the knowledge of their greater experience in distant voyages, but by political considerations, which might suggest that he could always control this trade as conducted by the Phœnicians, while to the Edomites, living on the borders of the Elanitic Gulf, it would give such advantages as might in time enable them to engross the whole trade, and to shake off the yoke his father had imposed upon them.

The interest which the king took in the matter, may be judged of from the fact that he went in person to the port of Ezion-geber, at the head of the gulf, to superintend the preparations and to witness the departure of the fleet.

A thirst for knowledge, which is one of the surest evidences of the " wisdom " with which this splendid monarch was gifted, may have had some share in promoting this design; for his agents were instructed, not only to seek wealth, but to bring back specimens of whatever was curious or instructive in the countries to which they came. We know they brought various foreign animals and birds; and since the king took much interest in botany, it is more than likely that they also brought the seeds of many plants which had engaged their attention by their use or beauty; and that consequently we may refer to this reign the introduction into Palestine of many plants which had not been known there in former times.

The fleet returned in the third year, laden with the rich and curious treasures of the south and the remote east. There were vast quantities of gold and silver, while the bulk of the cargo was composed of elephants' teeth, and various sorts of valuable woods and precious stones. Nor were the supercargoes which the king sent in the ships unmindful of his

* 'Pictorial Bible,' Notes on 2 Chron. ix. 10, 21; and xx. 36.

peculiar tastes, and probably his special orders, for they took pains to collect examples of the more curious animals, and doubtless other products, of the countries to which they came. Among these, monkeys and peacocks are particularly named—probably from their more singular difference from the forms of animal life with which the Hebrews were previously acquainted.

Without doubt, a large portion of the commodities thus obtained were sold at a great profit. And this explains that while in one place the yearly weight of gold brought to the king, by his ships, is stated at 480 talents, the yearly profit in gold derived both directly and indirectly from these voyages, is counted at the weight of 666 talents,* which according to the lower computation would make not less than 3,646,350*l.*, while a higher scale would make it little short of 4,000,000*l.*†

Of the precious woods, Solomon employed a considerable portion in making balustrades for the temple, and in the fabrication of instruments of music. And of the gold, a large quantity was used in making various sorts of golden shields, and the various vessels of the palace. In that palace *all* the vessels were of gold; silver was not seen there: for under the influx of gold as well as of silver, from various sources, the latter metal was much depreciated in value during this splendid reign:—" It was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon; he made it to be in Jerusalem as stones." And, in like manner, the rather poor wood of the cedar, which had previously, in the want of large and good timber, acquired a high value, sunk much in estimation, through the large importations of the compact and beautiful eastern timbers, as well as through the profuse supply of cedar-wood itself from Lebanon. Some idea of the various uses to which the foreign woods were applied may be derived from the practices of the Egyptians, of which some notice will be taken at the end of the chapter. ([2])

Besides this maritime traffic the caravan trade by land engaged a full share of Solomon's attention. By the possession of a southern frontier stretching across from the Elanitic Gulf to the Mediterranean, the land traffic between Egypt and Syria lay completely at his mercy. He felt this, and through some arrangement with his father-in-law the king of Egypt, he contrived to monopolise it entirely in his own hands. It appears that what Syria chiefly required from Egypt were *linen fabrics* and *yarn*,‡ for the manufacture of which that country had long been celebrated ; also *chariots*, the extensive use of which in Egypt has already been pointed out; and *horses*, of which that country possessed a very excellent and superior breed, if we may judge from the numerous fine examples which the paintings and sculptures offer. All this trade Solomon appears to have intercepted and monopolised. He was supplied by contract, at a fixed price, with certain quantities adequate to the supply of the Syrian market, which, after retaining what he required for himself, his factors sold, doubtless at a high profit, to the different kings of Syria. The price was doubtless arbitrary, and dependent on times and circumstances; but the contract price at which the chariots and horses were supplied by the Egyptians to the Hebrew factors happens to be named,—600 silver shekels § for a chariot, and one-fourth of that sum, or 150 shekels,‖ for a horse.

This was not the only land traffic which engaged the notice of Solomon. His attention was attracted to the extensive and valuable caravan trade which, from very remote ages, coming from the farther east, and the Persian Gulf, proceeded to Egypt, Tyre, and other points on the Mediterranean, by the Euphrates and across the great Syrian desert. The habitable points of that desert, even to the great river, were now under the dominion of the Hebrew king, and even the Bedouin tribes by whom it was chiefly inhabited were brought under tribute to him, and were kept in order by the dread of his great name. Under these circumstances, Solomon was in nearly as favourable a position for taking a part in this trade as in the land traffic

* Compare 1 Kings ix. 28 with x. 14.

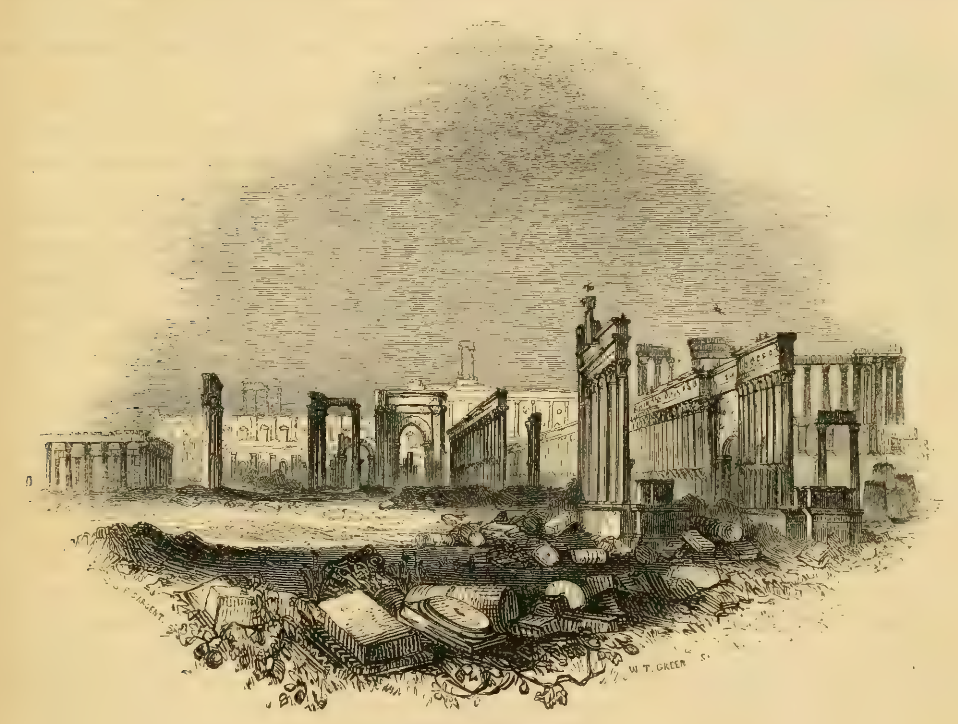
† The first, that of Arbuthnot, reckons a gold talent as worth 5475*l.* at 4*l.* the ounce; the other estimates the *silver* talent at 375*l.*, and counting gold as sixteen times the value of silver, raises the gold talent to 6000*l.* Another computation makes it even more.

‡ Some interpretations reject both the linen and yarn from the text, or rather give a different sense. We enter not into this question. It is certain that linen was a famous manufacture of Egypt, and *whether named or not*, was more than likely to form an important article in any trade with that country. See also Ezek. xxvii. 7, where " fine linen and broidered work from Egypt " are mentioned as purchased by the Tyrians.

§ Or 75*l.*

‖ Or 18*l.* 15*s.*

between Egypt and Syria. But the measures which he took were different, and more specially adapted to the circumstances of the case. They were less coercive, and dealt more in the offer of inducements and advantages. And the reason is obvious; for although the ordinary track of the great caravans lay through his territories, it was in the power of its conductors to alter that tract so as to pass northward beyond the limits of his dominion; but this would have produced such expense, trouble and delay, that it would have been preferable to maintain the old route even at the expense of some check and inconvenience. Whether the measures of Solomon were felt to be such, we do not know; they were possibly deemed by the caravan merchants and by the Hebrews, as mutually advantageous, although the ultimate purchasers, who could be no parties in this arrangement, possibly regarded them in a different light. The plan of Solomon was to erect in the very heart of the desert an emporium for this important trade. The route of a caravan is so directed as to include as many as possible of the places at which water may be found. At the most important of these stations, where water, and by consequence palm-trees, was found in the most abundance, the Hebrew king built a city and called it Tadmor,* (*a palm-tree*), whence its Greek name of Palmyra. But Greek and



[Tadmor.—Palmyra.]

Roman names never fixed themselves in the soil of Syria, and the ruins of the city bear, to this day, among the natives, the primitive name of *Tadmor*. Here the caravans not only found water as before, but every advantage of shelter and rest, while by this establishment Solomon was enabled more effectively to overawe the tribes, and to afford protection to the caravans from the predatory attempts and exactions of the Bedouins. Here the caravan merchants would soon find it convenient to dispose of their commodities, and leave the further distribution of them, to the nations west of the desert, either to the factors of Solomon, or to private merchants,—for we do not know to what extent the king found it advisable to have

* In the Ketib of 1 Kings ix. 18 it is put *Tamar*, the proper word for a palm-tree, showing that *Tadmor* has the same meaning, and probably that the *d* is merely introduced for euphony.

this trade free to his own subjects. It may be that private persons among his subjects, or even foreigners from the west, were not prevented from here meeting and dealing with the eastern merchants; but from the general—and with our present lights, we must say short-sighted—policy of Solomon's commercial doings, it may be inferred that he monopolised such advantages in this trade as he deemed safe or prudent. At the least, it must be presumed that he derived a considerable revenue, in the way of customs, from such merchandise as did not pass into the hands of his own factors; and this, however advantageous to the king, may have been felt by the caravan merchants but as a reasonable equivalent for the protection they enjoyed, and their freedom from the exactions of the Bedouins. Much of this, which we have stated as probably connected with the foundation of this city of the desert, is not stated in Scripture: but it is deducible from the improbability that without strong inducements a city would have been founded in such a situation, and from the detection of these inducements in the commercial enterprises of Solomon, with the illustration applied to the particular instance, which is derivable from the fact that the wealth and glory in which the Palmyra of a later day appears, was due entirely to the circumstance that its position made it an emporium for the caravan trade of the desert. In fact, that it was such at a long subsequent date, and that its very existence depended on its being such, illustrates and justifies that intention in its foundation which, on the strongest circumstantial evidence, we have ventured to ascribe to Solomon.

Besides these branches of commerce, "the traffic of the *spice* merchants" is mentioned* among the sources from which wealth accrued to Solomon. In what form this profit was derived is not distinctly intimated. From the analogy of his other operations, we might conclude that he bought up the costly spices and aromatics brought by the spice caravans of southernmost Arabia, which must needs pass through his territories; and that after deducting what sufficed for the large consumption of his own nation, he sold the residue at an enhanced price to the neighbouring nations. As it is certain that, from his own wants merely, an act of trade must have taken place between him and these caravans, this seems the more obvious conclusion, although, without this, he may have derived an important item of profit from this trade by levying customs upon it in its passage through his dominions.

Such, as far as they can be traced, were the commercial operations of Solomon. It is quite easy *now*, and in a commercial country like our own, to see that these operations were, for the most part, based on wrong views and principles, inasmuch as however they might tend to the aggrandisement of *the king*, they could confer little solid and enduring benefit on *the nation*. But in the East, where the king is the state, and becomes himself the centre of most public acts, he is seldom found to take interest in commerce, but from regarding it as a source of emolument to the state, by his direct and personal concern therein. The king himself is a trader, with such advantages resulting from his position, as inevitably exclude the private merchant from the field in which he appears. He is inevitably a monopolist; and a sovereign monopoly is, if not an evil, at least not a benefit to the people, whatever wealth it may seem to bring into the country. The river, however noble, gives fertility only to the banks which hem it in; and it is only when its waters are drawn off in their course, and exhausted into a thousand channels, that they bless and glorify the wide country around. Solomon, in his Book of Ecclesiastes, acquaints us with many "vanities" and "sore evils" which he saw "under the sun;" but from this statement we do not learn that he ever became conscious of the very great vanity and most sore evil of a rich king over a poor people, or of the system which makes the king rich while the people remain comparatively poor.

M. Salvador,† in a very interesting chapter on the subject of the Hebrew commerce, appears to approve of the traffic which was opened in this reign with Tyre, Egypt, and Syria; but the distant voyages to Ophir are justly represented by him as standing on a different ground,

* 1 Kings x. 15.

† 'Institutions de Moïse,' Tom. i. ch. vi. The subject is, however, as it appears to us, reasoned too much on *general* principles without sufficient reference to the *special* destinies of the Hebrew people; an objection which indeed applies very largely to this very able and ingenious work.

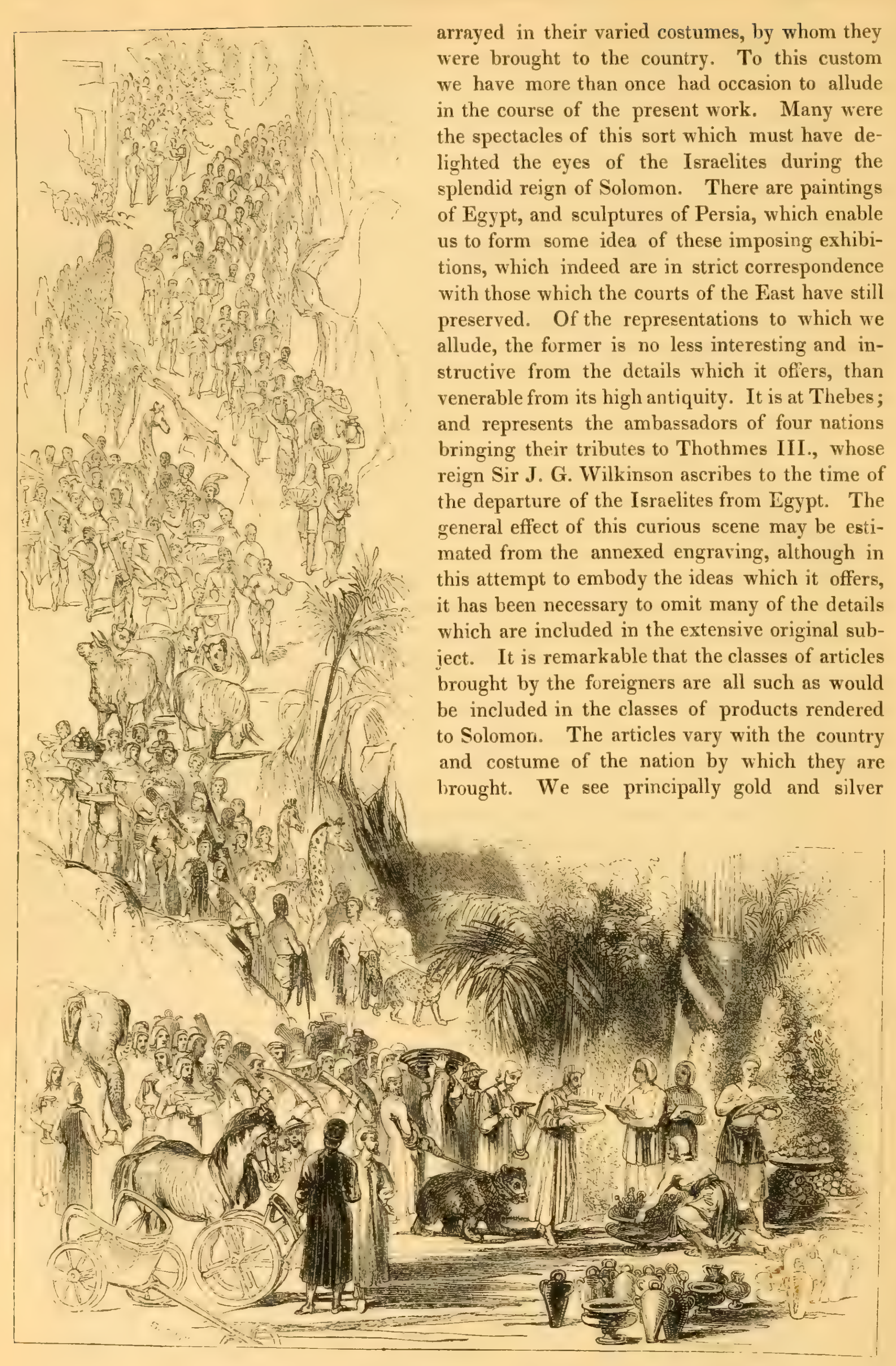
although the important consideration to which we have adverted escaped his notice. He considers that in this enterprise, the limits which both nature and sound policy had fixed to the Hebrew commerce were by a most unwise ambition overpassed. It is not, he remarks, sufficient to imagine or even to execute, great things ; it is necessary that they should be suited to times and circumstances, it is necessary to consolidate them. And this was a wisdom which Solomon wanted. The commerce of Israel should have been simply a commerce of commission and transit. The territorial wealth of the country afforded the means of accomplishing this with great advantage. Besides the commercial advantages, the country had numerous outlets for all its agricultural products ; and afterwards it enjoyed a good market for foreign products, the transport, which is in general most expensive, being effected almost without real cost by the returning merchants. But instead of confining himself to these obvious sources of profit, Solomon was incited by his vanity, and by the example of the Tyrians, to send forth numerous fleets at a vast cost. The success of these expeditions introduced a disproportionate luxury into Jerusalem, replacing there the rich simplicity of life which had previously characterised the Hebrew nation. A court, organised on the most splendid oriental models,—a vast seraglio, a sumptuous table, officers without number, and hosts of avidious concubines, afflicted a country in which the balance of conditions and property, as established by Moses, ought to have been maintained with the most jealous exactitude.

To this M. Salvador attributes many evils, which we shall not anticipate our narrative by repeating here. It will be obvious, however, that whatever evils arose from this traffic, should not, in this fashion, be attributed to the trade itself, or even to the wealth which it brought into the country, but to the mistaken principle on which that trade was conducted, and to the unprofitable absorption into the royal treasury of the wealth which it produced.

Traffic and imposts on traffic, were not, however, the only sources from which Solomon obtained his wealth. Large revenues were derived from the annual tributes of the foreign states, which were now subject to the Hebrew sceptre, or over which it exercised a more or less stringent influence. The kings and princes of such states appear to have sent their tribute in the form of quantities of the principal articles which their country produced, or was able to procure ; as did also the governors of the provinces not left under the native princes. Besides the regular tax or tribute derived from countries more or less closely annexed to the Hebrew kingdom, there were more distant states which found it good policy to conciliate the favour of Solomon, or to avert his hostility by annual offerings, which, under the soft name of "presents," formed no contemptible item of the royal revenue. Of that revenue one item is mentioned in rather singular terms :—"All the earth sought to Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put into his heart. And they brought every man his *present*, utensils of silver, and utensils of gold, and garments, and armour, and spices, horses and mules, *a rate year by year*." Here the terms "presents," and "a rate year by year," have a degree of opposition at the first view, which seems to require us to suppose either that those great men who had once resorted to Jerusalem to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and to behold the manifestation of it in the ordering of his court and kingdom, not only brought with them the presents which the usages of the East rendered the necessary accompaniments of such visits, but that they continued to send from their several lands yearly gifts of compliment to him. Or else, that the desire of thus complimenting the monarch whom God had so eminently gifted, furnished a decent pretence to those who had other reasons for rendering a real tribute to him. The latter interpretation is that which we prefer. And it is certain that in the case of the only royal visit which is particularly described—that of the Queen of Sheba—only such presents as she brought with her are named, and no "rate year by year" is intimated. Ethiopia was too remote to be within reach of the influences which may have determined the monarchs of nearer nations to make their "presents" to Solomon a yearly payment.

The articles mentioned in the extract just given, together with those named in other places, enable us to form some idea of the display which these annual or occasional renderings of tributes and of traffics must have offered. It has been the fashion of the East to make a show of such offerings by their being taken in procession to the palace of the king by the persons,

arrayed in their varied costumes, by whom they were brought to the country. To this custom we have more than once had occasion to allude in the course of the present work. Many were the spectacles of this sort which must have delighted the eyes of the Israelites during the splendid reign of Solomon. There are paintings of Egypt, and sculptures of Persia, which enable us to form some idea of these imposing exhibitions, which indeed are in strict correspondence with those which the courts of the East have still preserved. Of the representations to which we allude, the former is no less interesting and instructive from the details which it offers, than venerable from its high antiquity. It is at Thebes; and represents the ambassadors of four nations bringing their tributes to Thothmes III., whose reign Sir J. G. Wilkinson ascribes to the time of the departure of the Israelites from Egypt. The general effect of this curious scene may be estimated from the annexed engraving, although in this attempt to embody the ideas which it offers, it has been necessary to omit many of the details which are included in the extensive original subject. It is remarkable that the classes of articles brought by the foreigners are all such as would be included in the classes of products rendered to Solomon. The articles vary with the country and costume of the nation by which they are brought. We see principally gold and silver



[Tribute-bearers.]

money in rings; vases and other utensils of the same metal, of very various and often truly elegant shapes; baskets containing sealed bags, probably of jewels; baskets of fruits, carefully packed and covered with leaves to preserve their freshness; growing plants,—in one instance we see a shrub transported in a growing state: it is enclosed with the mould in which it grows, in a kind of open case, which is carried between two men suspended from a pole, the ends of which rest on their shoulders. Then there are elephants' teeth, and beams of ebony and other valuable woods; and, besides the skins of various animals, particularly leopards, there is a most interesting exhibition of various living animals conducted to the king. Among these are giraffes, various well-distinguished species of apes and monkeys, leopards, and even bears. There were also oxen, of a different breed to that common in the country, as were probably the horses, which also figure in the procession, and which, with chariots, form perhaps the most remarkable objects of the whole, as being brought to a country which itself abounded in horses and chariots; but the horses were probably desirable to the Egyptians as of a foreign breed, and the chariots as a curious foreign manufacture. Upon the whole, a more striking and appropriate illustration of this part of Solomon's glory cannot well be imagined.

The wealth which flowed into the royal treasury from these various sources appears to have been freely disbursed by Solomon in enriching his buildings, in extending their number, and in the ordering of his court and kingdom. Besides the buildings which have already been pointed out, various public structures were built by him in Jerusalem, which city he also enclosed by new walls, fortified with strong towers. Other important towns (as Gaza) were fortified, and new ones built in different parts of the country. Besides Tadmor, which has already engaged our notice, Baalath is named among the towns built by him; and this is supposed by many to be no other than the afterwards celebrated city of Baalbec, in the great valley of Cœle-Syria.*

The account which is given of the internal organization of Solomon's kingdom occurs prior even to that which describes the building of the Temple.† But there is reason to think that these arrangements did not, until a later date, assume the completed form in which they are there exhibited. The statement at the first view contains little more than a list of officers. But on closer inspection it will be found that even such a list is suggestive of an orderly arrangement and distribution of functions, as well as of the nature of what was considered public business. If it should be observed that most of these have reference to the supply of the wants of the court and the maintenance of the royal authority, it must be admitted that these are practically the chief objects of Oriental governments. However, we shall perceive that in all states such offices make the most conspicuous figure to the eye of the spectator, which if it penetrates more deeply, may discover that adequate provision is nevertheless made through the working of some recognised and unostentatious system, and through the ministration of less splendid functionaries, for the well being and the good government of the people. The internal polity of the constitution, as organised by the institutions of Moses, joined to the principles of patriarchal government still at work in the several tribes, might seem adequate to every purpose of internal government. And whatever might be thus left wanting, was supplied by the regulation of David, to which Solomon himself gave effect, appointing Levitical "judges and officers throughout the land."

The list, as given in the sacred narrative, has rather a formal appearance; and in the usual way in which such lists are prepared, begins with the king himself,—"Thus king Solomon was king over all Israel," and then proceeds to enumerate the officers of his government.

Azariah, the son (or rather grandson) of Zadok the high-priest, and two others, the sons of Sheva, were the "SCRIBES." This Sheva, the father, had been sole scribe in the time of David; and that three persons were now required in this office, seems to show either the great increase of business which the arrangements of Solomon threw into this department, or some improved views as to the distribution of labour. These appear to have been the royal

* See the engraving at p. cvi.

† 1 Kings iv.

secretaries, through whom all the king's more formal commands were issued, and who registered all public acts and decrees.*

The office of "Recorder" was occupied under Solomon by Jehoshaphat the son of the person (Ahilud) who had held it in the time of David. The marginal renderings in our Bibles, "a remembrancer, *or* a writer of chronicles," help to convey a notion of this office. The only difficulty is in drawing the line clearly between the functions of the recorder and those of the scribes. But his functions appear to have been of a less temporary nature than theirs; it being rather his business to give the form of permanent records or chronicles to the occurrences of his time, particularly such as related to the king and court. In Oriental courts this was an office of great trust and importance. The records formed by these officers in the Hebrew court, probably furnished the materials from which the Books of Kings and Chronicles were compiled; and the two books of the latter perhaps exhibit nearly the form of the original documents.†

The office of "Captain of the Host" has been brought historically under our notice in sufficient prominence to render any separate statement unnecessary.

The King's Friend, or Companion, seems to have been very nearly what we understand by the term *Favourite*, as distinguished from the responsible chief minister. From the connection in which it occurs, it seems that this person was admitted to the peculiar intimacy of the king, was in all his secrets, and conversed familiarly with him. Sometimes a person holding no public office enjoyed these privileges; but we at other times find it associated with some important office in the state. So it was under Solomon, whose *own Friend*, Zabud, a son of the prophet Nathan, was also "the chief officer," which appears to point him out as what we call the prime minister. Hushai, without any such office, was "the king's friend," in the time of David; and very worthily did he support that character. In later times the term came to be used in a more general sense, as applied to any one employed to execute the royal commands, or holding a high office in the state.‡

The Prime Minister, as we should call him, appears to be the person who is described in Scripture as "*next* (or, literally, *second*) *to the king*." Solomon had no officer *thus* indicated; but as we have just intimated, Zabud appears to have enjoyed it. This was the office which the excellent Jonathan was willing to occupy under David—"Thou shalt be king, and I will be *next unto thee*;"§ but which in that reign would appear to have been really filled by one or more of the king's own sons; for it is said, "The sons of David were chief ministers about the king."‖ This office was of the highest antiquity in the different eastern courts; Joseph filled it in the court of Egypt, and Haman in that of Persia.¶

The Royal Counsellors are persons of whom we possess but slight information. They appear to have been persons of great experience, of which the king found it expedient to avail himself on occasions of importance. The most marked instances are those in which Absalom called the council to consult about the measures to be taken against David; when the young prince implicitly followed the course which seemed the best to his council. It is clear that David had such a council, as some of the counsellors are named. But that Solomon had one, does not appear till after his death, when his weak and headstrong son consulted "the old men that stood before Solomon while he lived;" but fatally rejected their discreet counsel and preferred that of his own self-willed contemporaries. Of course the king took counsel with the officers of state respecting the matters connected with their several offices; but on matters of general policy, the council appears to have been consulted; and such of the counsellors whose names occur in the history did not hold any administrative office in the state. In the time of David, Ahitophel was one; Hushai, *the king's friend*, another; and Jonathan, David's uncle, appears to have been a third.**

* See 2 Sam. viii. 17; xx. 25; 1 Kings iv. 3; 2 Kings xviii. 18; Isa. xxxvi. 3.

† See 2 Sam. viii. 16; xx. 24; 1 Kings iv. 3; 2 Kings xviii. 18. 37; 2 Chron. xviii. 15; Isa. xxxvi. 3; Est. iii. 12; vi. 1; x. 2. Comp. Herodot. vi. 100; vii. 9; viii. 90.

‡ 2 Sam. xv. 37; xvi. 16; 1 Kings iv. 5; 1 Macc. x. 63; xi. 26. 27.

§ 1 Sam. xxiii. 17.

‖ 1 Chron. xviii. 17.

¶ Gen. xli. 40, 43; Est. iii. 1. See also 2 Chron. xxviii. 7.

** 2 Sam. xvi. 15—23; xvii; 1 Kings xii. 6; 1 Chron. xxvii. 32, 33; Isa. iii. 3; xix. 11, 12; Jer. xxvi. 11.

An Eastern king never takes any step without consulting an astrologer, who is supposed to have the means of ascertaining the result of the proposed actions, or at least to know the propitious moments for their commencement. In ancient times kings sought to learn the will of heaven not only through astrologers, but through priests, augurs and diviners. This example was followed by the ill-disposed and idolatrous Hebrew kings; but the faithful vicegerents of Jehovah were heedful to consult one of his PROPHETS on every occasion of importance, that through him they might learn whether the course which they had in view was acceptable to the Great King. To him this reference and becoming acknowledgment that his sovereignty was *a reality*, was highly acceptable. Indeed the Lord was not unmindful to enforce his own rights as the true political head of the Hebrew state, by directing his prophets to give his orders or his counsel to those kings who were so unmindful of their true position as to neglect to seek for either. Under the monarchy, therefore, the prophet occupied the important position of agent for communicating to the human king the orders, and making known to him the will, of the King Jehovah, his political superior in the Hebrew state, to whom he owed allegiance, and to whom he was bound by the very tenure of his office to obey. It is remarkable that under the monarchy, there is no instance after the reign of Saul in which the will of Jehovah was made known by Urim and by Thummim as in former times. It will be seen that, in this point of view, the *Prophet* was in fact a functionary of very high political importance in the Hebrew state.

The person who was "*over the tribute*" appears to have been over those who collected all taxes and tributes, whether from the native Israelites, or from subjected states; and who received the amount and consigned it to the treasure chambers of the king. It would thus appear that his office answered in some degree to that of our Chancellor of the Exchequer. The same person, Adoram, was over the tribute in the reigns both of David and Solomon.*

The names of the MANAGERS OF THE CROWN PROPERTY do not occur in the list of Solomon's officers; but we find them in the time of David, as they were doubtless preserved in that of his son, who had, in fact, more need of them. The list is valuable and interesting, as it affords information concerning what may be called the private property of the crown, as distinguished from the revenues of state. They are as follow:—"Over the king's treasures was Azmaveth, the son of Adiel: and over the store-houses, in the fields, in the cities, in the villages, and in the citadels, was Jonathan, the son of Uzziah. And even those who wrought in the fields, for tillage of the ground, was Ezri, the son of Chelub. And over the vineyards was Shimei, a Ramathite; but over the produce of the vineyards, in the wine cellars, was Zabdi, a Shiphmite. And over the olive-trees and sycamores which were in the plains was Baal-hanan, a Gederite; and over the oil cellars was Joash. And over the herds that fed in Sharon, was Shitrai, a Sharonite; and over the herds that were in the valley, was Shaphat, the son of Adlai. Over the camels was Obil, an Ishmaelite (a Bedouin); and over the asses was Jehdeiah, a Meronathite. And over the flocks was Jaziz, a Hagerite (an Arab). All those were rulers of the property which belonged to king David."†

Here we have the indication of sources of revenue with which we should not otherwise have been acquainted. As to the flocks, besides this statement, the reader may refer to 1 Sam. xxi. 7; 2 Sam. xiii. 23; by which it will appear that there was such a property early in the reign of Saul; and that, under David, the sons of the king had possessions of this nature. There are so many obvious ways by which such a property might be formed, without interference with any known right or principle, that no inquiry on the subject is necessary. Michaelis collects from the passage we have quoted, that, as both king and subjects had the right of pasture in the Arabian deserts, David kept numerous herds there, which were partly under the care of Arabian herdsmen.

Another branch of property here indicated offers a subject of inquiry of far greater interest. It is obvious that even as early as David's reign, there was an extensive and valuable property in land attached to the crown, consisting of arable lands, vineyards, plantations of the olive

* 2 Sam. xx. 24 1 Kings iv. 6.

† 1 Chron. xxvii. 25—31.

and sycamore, etc. And the question is, how such a possession could be collected in a country where the land was strictly entailed upon the descendants of the original possessors, and could not, in perpetuity, be sold. How this law might be infringed it is unnecessary to indicate; but it is of importance to see that a royal demesne might be formed without any interference with its operation. In the first place, there was land in the hands of the descendants of the Canaanites, which had not been included in the original distributions of the soil as made by Joshua, and which might be acquired by purchase from the owners. In fact, the site of the temple was thus purchased by David from Araunah the Jebusite. It also appears that, in practice, although we apprehend that the strict principle of the law would scarcely justify it, the lands of persons executed for offences against the state were estreated to the crown: and this, as the only means by which the king could, with any show of legal pretence, acquire property already in the hands of an Israelite led to grievous injustice and oppression on the part of unscrupulous kings. Then, again, in the East, waste uncultivated lands are considered to belong to no one in particular. They are called "God's lands," and become the particular property of the persons who first bring them into cultivation. Now, the superior command of capital and labour enjoyed by the kings, must have given them peculiar advantages in forming a demesne from this source; and, considering how they were restricted in other respects, we cannot suppose they were backward in availing themselves of this advantage. It appears that the lands belonging to the crown were, for the most part, cultivated by bondsmen, and perhaps also by the people of conquered countries.* Yet it also seems that the royal vineyards, etc., were in some instances rented out to tenants, by whom they were cultivated, and who rendered to the proprietor, as for rent, a certain proportion of the produce, or its estimated value in money.†

Seeing that all these offices existed in the time of David, and they comprehend nearly all those that are mentioned in the time of Solomon, much, if not all, of the credit of that organisation of the kingdom which these offices imply, may be ascribed rather to the father than the son, although it may be more convenient to view the whole in the completed form which the kingly administration took in the reign of the latter. There are, however, a few new offices which are mentioned in the reign of Solomon. One is that of Governor of the Palace, whose office appears to be similar to that of the *stewards* employed by rich men to superintend their affairs. He had charge of the servants, and indeed of everything that pertained to the palace.‡ From the passage in Isa. xxii. 22, which contains a promise of investiture in this office, it has with reason been inferred that this functionary wore a peculiar and distinctive dress, bound with a precious girdle, and that he carried on his shoulder a richly ornamented key. With reference to this last inference, which is deduced from—"I will lay the key of the house of David upon his shoulder," it should perhaps only be considered to suggest that a key was the ensign of his office.

Another body of officers was introduced into the state by Solomon, which we may readily believe to have been far from popular in the nation. They were twelve in number, with a president, who was Azariah, a son of the prophet Nathan. These twelve were appointed to preside over the collections of provisions in as many districts, into which the land of Israel was divided. Every one was charged with the duty of collecting in his district, within the year, provisions enough to support the court for one month, following each other in rotation. It appears likely that the produce thus collected formed the kingly *tenth*, the exaction of which had been foretold by Samuel, and of which the present seems the first intimation. The comparative simplicity of the court of Saul, and the great spoil obtained by David in his wars, without any corresponding expenditure, had probably rendered this imposition previously unnecessary. We have already explained why this imposition must have been felt in a peculiar degree onerous to the Hebrew people, on the ground that they *already* paid the sovereign tithe to the true king of the Hebrew nation, Jehovah. And although they had been forewarned that this additional charge upon them would follow as a necessary

* 2 Chron. xxvi. 10. † Sol. Song viii. 11.

‡ 1 Kings iv. 6; xviii. 3; 2 Kings xviii. 18; 2 Chron. xxviii. 7; Isa. xxii. 15; xxxvi. 3; xxxvii. 2, *et seq.*

consequence of their unauthorised choice of a human king, we may be sure that the first to impose it would greatly compromise his popularity with the people. That Solomon actually did so—that he imposed upon the people unaccustomed burdens which they felt to be very grievous—are facts which we know, and seem to point to him as the one who first demanded the obnoxious tenth, which, as we have intimated, was probably paid in the form of the produce which these twelve officers were appointed to collect. The "store cities," and granaries which Solomon is said to have erected in different parts of the country, were doubtless the places in each district to which the produce of that district was brought, and in which it was deposited until required for the use of the court. Supplying the court with provisions merely, might seem to the English reader no very heavy task to a nation. But a different notion will be formed by reference to the large numbers of persons who are fed from what may be considered as the provision supplied to an Eastern court. Vast numbers of persons, who acted in some capacity or other as the servants of the numerous officers of the king; the officers and servants of the great personages who were constantly visiting the court of Solomon, and the numerous servants of those officers and royal servants; the harem, which alone contained a thousand women, with a great number of servants and eunuchs; and probably the rations of the royal guards and of all dependent upon them :—all were to be supplied from the court, being considered as members or guests of the royal household. This explains the prodigious quantities of victuals which were *daily* required for the use of the court, of which the account is—"Solomon's provision for one day was thirty cores (750 bushels) of fine flour, and sixty cores (1500 bushels) of common flour; ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen of the pastures, and a hundred sheep, beside harts, and roebucks, and fallow deer, and fatted fowl."*

As a matter of form and arrangement for a specific purpose, there was much to admire in the orderly supply of provisions to the court; and it was probably not less this than the vast quantities brought in and consumed, together with the manner in which it was prepared and distributed, which engaged the admiring notice of the Queen of Sheba, although the arrangements connected with the dignified attendance and the splendid display at Solomon's own table



[Oriental State Dinner. From D'Ohsson.]

* 1 Kings v. 22—24.

is mentioned as the chief matter of her wonder. Of the state and attendance at a grand dinner in the East, to which a distinct reference is thus made, the previous cut may suggest some idea to the reader; and it forms the only pictorial illustration of this subject which we have been able to obtain.

We doubt that the charge of supplying the extravagant consumption of the court was the only burden which Solomon ventured to impose on the Israelites. There are indications that there was also a tax in money; but whether to complete the kingly *tenth*, or as additional thereto, it may not be easy to determine. The reason for this conclusion is chiefly that this provision for the court is not called a " tribute" or " tax," and was managed by distinct officers under a distinct chief from any other. And yet it appears that a tribute was collected from the people by the separate officer who was " over the tribute." One of the first transactions of the succeeding reign put this beyond a doubt.

And besides this, it would seem that the people had the charge of supporting the numerous *horses* kept by Solomon. Unmindful of the law by which the kings were expressly forbidden " to multiply horses unto themselves," Solomon formed a numerous body of cavalry. He had 1400 chariots, which, being Egyptian chariots, doubtless had two horses to each; and not fewer than 12,000 horsemen. A portion of these he kept in Jerusalem, and the rest were distributed through the land in what were called from this circumstance, the " chariot-cities." This distribution was doubtless made for the purpose of equally distributing the charge of their subsistence.


[Egyptian on Horseback.]

With respect to the chariots, these being Egyptian, we are at no loss respecting their appearance and furniture. But it is remarkable that, although it is unquestionable that there was a mounted cavalry in Egypt, and that Solomon's " horsemen" were mounted on trained Egyptian horses, there is but one representation of a man on horseback in the whole range of the sculptured and painted antiquities of that country. From its extreme curiousness, a copy of this is now introduced. Doubtless, the horsemen, distributed in separate bodies throughout the country, took their rotations of service at Jerusalem, where it appears to have been their immediate duty to act as a sort of life-guard to the king in excursions and journeys; and their appearance and appointments as such seem to receive illustration from the figure and equipments of a modern oriental cavalier of a corresponding station, or appearing as armed for enterprise. Josephus reckons up the horses of Solomon as 20,000, and says that they were the most beautiful in their appearance and the most remarkable for their swiftness that could anywhere be seen; and that, to preserve these qualities, they were kept in constant and careful exercise. The riders were in their appearance quite worthy of their horses. They were young men in the beauty and flower of their age, and the tallest in stature that could be found in the country. Their undress was of Tyrian purple; and their long hair, which hung in loose tresses,

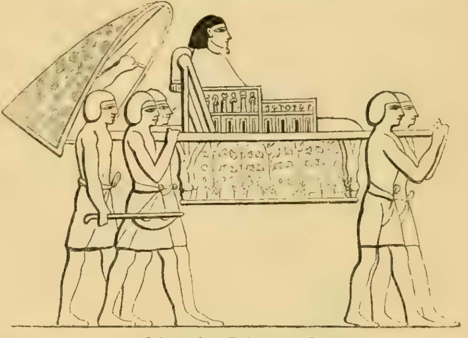

[Modern Oriental Cavalier.]

glittered with golden dust with which, every day, they sprinkled their heads. But when they attended the king they were in complete armour, and had their bows ready strung. Often, in the fine season, the king rode down to his beautiful gardens at Etham,* six miles from Jerusalem, attended by these young men. On such occasions he rode loftily in his chariot, arrayed in white robes.†

But we have a still better description of the manner of the king's excursions, from the pen of Solomon himself, in his renowned Song of Songs. His bride is represented sitting in her kiosk, and looking towards the quarter in which the royal gardens lay; and takes notice of an appearance concerning which she inquires of her virgins:—

" *Bride.*—What is this that cometh from the wilderness,
Like clouds of smoke perfumed with myrrh,
With incense, and all the powders of the merchant?
Virgins.—Behold! this is the *palanquin* of Solomon.
Three-score valiant men are about it,
Of the valiant of Israel.
They all bear swords, being expert in war;
Each bears his sword on his thigh,
On account of the perils of the night.
King Solomon hath made for himself
This *couch* of the wood of Lebanon.
Its pillars hath he made of silver,
Its bases of gold, its cushions of purple.
The middle of it is spread with love‡
By the daughters of Jerusalem."§

This is a very clear description of a splendid palanquin or litter, and shows that this conveyance was then in use among great people, as it was in Egypt, and is still, in one form or another, throughout the East. The form of the palanquin usually employed in ancient Egypt is shown in the annexed engraving; and, seeing how the luxuries and refinements of Egypt were now adopted in Palestine, with the evidence before us that the palanquin had come into use, this was doubtless one of the forms in which it was used. But Harmer, in his illustrations of Solomon's Song, thinks that the description would suggest a comparison to the *howdah*, in which, on the back of an



[Egyptian Palanquin.]



[Howdah of an Indian Prince.‖]

* These are most probably those of which the still beautiful site has been described in the ' Physical History,' p. cxxiv.
† Antiq. viii. 7. 3.
‡ That is, spread with cushions wrought in the most elegant manner, and ornamented with flowers.
§ Sol. Song iii. 6—11.
‖ This cut, from Maudeslo, is copied less distinctly into the title-page of Harmer's volume, as illustrative of the subject

elephant, the princes of India are wont to ride in state. The attendants, with their shields, offer another point of illustration; for we read of, and have had occasion to mention, the golden shields employed by the guards of king Solomon. Nevertheless, seeing that elephants were not in use in Western Asia for this purpose, and that it is only barely possible that Solomon should have had any of these noble creatures—we should rather suppose that he availed himself of the similar and much easier conveyance used still in those parts of Asia which do not possess the elephant. This is a litter, shaped something like the howdah, but generally longer, to afford the rider the advantage of reclining at his ease. It is generally closed except the front, or partly open on one or both sides but often it has only curtains, more or less rich, which may be drawn as the rider wishes. This is not carried on the back of any animal, but is borne, after the manner of a sedan-chair or an ordinary palanquin, between two camels or mules, and, from its stately and often splendid appearance, has the Persian name of *takht ravan*, or "moving throne."*

In this attempt to convey some notion of the royal establishments, the wealth, the state, and the pomp of Solomon's court, which, on an inferior scale, formed the model to subsequent Hebrew kings, it is necessary that some notice of his harem should be taken.

The women of the king's harem are to be considered as making a part of his retinue or equipage, since, generally speaking, they were merely designed to augment the pomp which belonged to his character and his situation. The multiplication of women in the character of wives and concubines was, indeed, forbidden in the strongest manner by the law of Moses; † but Solomon, and, though in a less extent, several other Hebrew kings, paid little heed to this admonition, and too readily and wickedly exposed themselves to the dangers which Moses had anticipated as the result of pursuing the course which he had interdicted.

The kings willingly submitted to any expense which might be deemed necessary in ornamenting the persons of their women, and of the eunuchs (the black ones especially) who guarded them. It may be remarked here that eunuchs were brought at a great expense from foreign countries, inasmuch as the mutilation of men was contrary to the Mosaic law.‡ The women of the harem were considered as concubines (or secondary wives) to the king. But the successor to the throne, although he came into possession of the harem, was not at liberty to have any intercourse with the members of it.



[Eunuch of the Turkish Seraglio. D'Ohsson.]

Although the king had unlimited power over the harem, yet the wife who was chiefly in favour, and, as we have already seen, more especially the king's own mother, had great authority and weight in political matters. Hence in the books of Kings and Chronicles the mother of the king is everywhere spoken of as one of the royal counsellors.§

The women in the harem of Solomon were not fewer than one thousand, of whom the Scripture counts seven hundred as wives and three hundred as concubines. This distinction may be taken as illustrated by Solomon's own classification at a time when he was younger, and his harem was less extensive, than in the later day to which the present statement refers:—"In my palace are threescore *queens*, and fourscore *concubines*, and *virgins* without number."‖ Here by *queens* we are probably to understand those of noble parentage, who at the celebration

* No separate illustration is provided for this, as we shall presently have occasion to show it in the cut which exhibits an Abyssinian queen on a journey.

† Deut. xvii. 17.

‡ For proof of the employment of eunuchs in the harems of the Hebrew kings, see 1 Kings xxii. 9; 2 Kings viii. 6; ix. 32, 33; xx. 18; xxiii. 11; Jer. xxxviii. 7; xxxix. 16; xli. 16.

§ See Jahn, sect. 236.

‖ Sol. Song vi. 8.

of their nuptials brought ample dowries with them; by *concubines* those who were selected on account of their personal charms, and were married without dowries; and by *virgins* those who were also procured (perhaps purchased) by the royal purveyors on account of their beauty, and who were in waiting to be introduced to the royal notice. With the number of these Solomon himself does not appear to have been acquainted. The same distribution doubtless applies to the larger number which now engages our notice.

That a large proportion of the whole were foreigners and idolaters is certain. The chief and favoured wife was undoubtedly the king of Egypt's daughter. She is so spoken of both in the Scripture and by Josephus. This lady is generally believed to be the bride in the Canticles. Of this there appears to us to be very little doubt. But were it otherwise, this bride was unquestionably a principal and distinguished wife; and from this source some information may be collected respecting the manners and state of the harem, and the position, privileges, and attendance of the favoured wife.

That among the first class of wives there was *one* distinguished above the others, and who was called, pre-eminently, *the Queen*, is evinced not only by this, but by other passages of Scripture. But the ground of this distinction is not clearly intimated; and, instead of inquiring the particular ground of this distinction, it is better to understand that the ground was various and fluctuating. Our apprehension is, that the first wife married with a dowry was the one who, as a mere matter of right, was considered entitled to this honour, unless she were superseded in it by another dowried wife giving birth to an heir to the crown; or unless the king subsequently obtained a wife so exalted in birth, that her father was entitled to expect and demand the first place for his daughter. Here are three grounds of preference, of which the mere personal liking of the monarch is not one. For the whole history and romance of the East attests that the chief wife could maintain her position, even when some other woman was more the object of the sovereign attention and regard; and that in fact the great current jealousy of the harem is that between the "sultaness" and the "favourite." But, indeed, neither in the Bible nor elsewhere does the king ever appear to think of the possibility of *deposing* the one who has become the chief wife, to promote the favourite to her place, though he might raise her to that highest station if a vacancy occurred. The queen could only be deposed for some strong crime or offence. Thus Rehoboam, Solomon's son and successor, made Maachah queen on declaring her son heir to the throne; but she was afterwards deposed (by her grandson) on account of her idolatries:* and in Persia queen Vashti was deposed, by the advice of the royal council, on account of her disobedience. We never read of a queen being deposed merely because the king liked another better.

It appears, throughout the Canticles, that this principal wife was attended, with much respect, by a considerable number of maidens; and as the attendance on the other wives of the first class was doubtless in proportion, although not equal, it may be that the number of females in the harem greatly exceeded the "thousand wives and concubines." In fact, these attendants formed, most probably, the "virgins without number," in even the early state of Solomon's harem; for it is usual for the inferior members of an oriental harem to wait upon each other † and upon the superior ladies.

The dress of the queen (for by that high title we had better, to avoid circumlocution, call the principal wife) was very splendid; but it does not clearly appear whether its splendour was distinctive, or was such in its fashion as any one of wealth and high rank might exhibit. The raiment was of cloth of gold and costly needlework,‡ and particular attention was paid to her head-tire. In the Canticles the king exclaims,—

> "Beautiful are thy brows with rows of jewels,
> And thy neck with strings of pearls!
> Yet rows of gold we will make for thee,
> Together with studs of silver."—*Sol. Song*, i. 10, 11.

* 2 Chron. xi. 21, 22; xv. 16.

† In a certain number of them the duty of attendance is taken by each in rotation.

‡ Psalm xlv. 9, 13, 14.

The first line intimates that the ornament of rows of jewels on the head, still much affected by ladies in the East,* was thus early in use, while the two last lines exhibit an intention to provide for her a head-ornament which, although of humbler materials (gold and silver, but perhaps set with jewels), was more honourably distinctive in its character. This was doubtless her *crown;* for that the principal wife was distinguished by a crown in the Hebrew court, as she was in that of Persia,† we learn from the prophet Jeremiah.‡

The other intimations concerning the queen's condition which may be collected from the Canticles are slight, but instructive to those who can detect the inner character of things and circumstances through, and by means of, the forms in which they are presented to the view.

The only passage of Scripture in which a woman is mentioned as eating in company with a man, is that in which the queen is represented as present at a garden banquet, with the king and a few of his intimates. This, however, was not a regular meal or public feast, but a sort of refection, as appears from the articles named. The king says,—

" I am come into my garden, my spouse;
I gather my myrrh with my spice;
I eat my honeycomb with my honey;
I drink my wine with my milk.
Eat, O my friends, O drink!
Yea, drink abundantly, O my beloved!"—*Sol. Song*, v. 1.

From the frequent mention of valuable perfumes, it may appear that the queen was distinguished by the cost of those which were profusely lavished on her person; and that, at least within the harem, she was served and attended with considerable state, very constantly appears. We shall be excused for mentioning one small circumstance, on account of the illustration it enables us to offer of the antiquity of a luxury, or rather comfort, which, in our northern climates, is of very modern use. This is the *umbrella.* Its very ancient use in Egypt is shown by the cut at p. 535, in which an attendant bears an umbrella of peculiar form behind the palanquin of his lord. There it had become a private convenience, whereas in other oriental countries it appears to have been, as it still is, an appurtenance of the kingly state. In the sculptures of Persia it is found as being borne by an attendant over the head of the king, and is of a shape not remarkably different from that which it now bears. Harmer § ingeniously conjectures that the passage in the Psalms (cxxi. 5)—"The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is the shade on thy right hand: the sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night,"—alludes to and indicates the ancient use of the umbrella in Palestine. It appears to us that, by an easy transition of ideas, there is a similar allusion in the Song of Songs, where the queen says,—"His banner over me is love."|| At all events, this instrument being probably in use in Palestine, it will, from the customs of the East, as illustrated in the annexed engraving, appear that the umbrella, or a



[Umbrella.—From Persepolis.]

* Olearius (p. 818) states that all the head-dress that the Persian ladies make use of are two or three rows of pearls, which are worn round the head, beginning at the forehead and descending down the cheeks and under the chin, so that their faces seem to be set in pearls. This head-dress seemed to him to be very ancient among the orientals, since, he says, *mention is made of it in the Song of Songs*, for which he refers to the present text. The sultana Hafiten is described by Lady M. W. Montague as wearing around her talpoche, or head-dress, " four strings of pearls, the finest and whitest in the world." And if it was only as a royal bride that the lady in the Canticles wore these rows of jewels, this also is illustrated by the later usages of the East; for when the Khalif Al Maimon went to receive Touran Dokht, the Tarikh Al Abbas reports that he found that princess " seated on a throne, her head laden with a thousand pearls, every one of them as big as a pigeon's egg or a large nut; and this rich coiffure the Khalif resolved should be assigned her for a dowry.

† Est. ii. 17.

‡ " Say unto the king *and to the queen,* Humble yourselves, sit ye down: for he will cause to fall from your head *the diadem* of your glory." Jer. xiii. 18. Blayney's version.

§ 'Observations,' vol. ii. p. 441.

|| Sol. Song, ii. 4.



[Indian Canopy and Umbrella.]

canopied adaptation of it, borne over her head, was one of the distinctions to which the queen, especially a daughter of the king of Egypt, might aspire.

We have dwelt on these small matters in this place, because no equally fitting opportunity for introducing them will hereafter occur, while they include too much illustration of the state of society, and of manners and ideas in a remote age and country, to be altogether overlooked. With respect to the harem in particular, we are glad to have said all we need say on a subject so humbling and so painful: for it is both, to contemplate a system under which a vast multitude of reasoning and feeling beings, who might be the blessed wives and mothers of a thousand homes, are brought together, as mere objects of state or appetite, and their lives utterly wasted to gratify the lust or ostentation of a single man. In the case of Solomon, the system brought its fatal retribution, which will presently be noticed as a matter of history. But there was another retribution, resulting from the natural reaction of this system, which has less been noticed; and this was the debasement of his own moral sense, as exemplified in the loss of the power of appreciating the many true and beautiful things which are found in the character of woman. The man is very greatly to be pitied who could say—"Behold, this have I found, comparing one by one to find out the reason; which as yet I seek, but have not found: one [*wise* or *good*] man among a thousand I have found, *but one woman among all these I have not found.*"* The definite number, corresponding with that of his wives and concubines, sufficiently intimates that *they* afforded him the experience from which he speaks, and from which he is evidently disposed to infer the general character of the sex. But a man much less wise than Solomon may discover "the reason" which eluded his research. He had placed both them and himself in a false position:—*them*, by bringing them into a condition, and under the operation of a system, which might seem as if ingeniously contrived for the very purpose of precluding the development and exercise of the peculiar energies and

* Eccles. vii. 27, 28.

virtues for which woman, in her true place, is distinguished; and *himself*, by rendering it impossible that he should ever witness those true feelings and small nobilities of character, which, even in this position, she might manifest among her own companions, although they expand only to perfection and bear good fruit under the genial warmth of domestic life.

King Solomon was unquestionably wise: but, from this and other matters, we may suspect the practical character of his wisdom—may doubt whether it were not rather "the wisdom of words," or of ideas, or even of knowledge, than that wisdom of conduct, or, more properly, wisdom manifested in conduct, which is worth more than all. But—aware of the imputations to which his conduct had laid him open, and how little he might seem to thoughtful men to have honoured the precious gifts which God had given to him—he has been careful to leave his own apology on record.* In this he exhibits himself as testing all the "vanities" of life to realise the *practical* conviction of their emptiness, and to rest the more assuredly in the conclusion that wisdom is the only real good for man under the sun. He alleges that all this while his wisdom remained with him; by which he must mean his general intellectual wisdom, particularly as enabling him to detect the unsatisfying nature of all the vanities of life. But whether it were the part of a wise man to consume his energies and time in such experiments on life; and whether the resulting conviction to himself could counterbalance the grievous and irremediable wrong which these experiments inflicted on others, are questions which do not engage his notice.

The view which we take,—that the proverbial wisdom of Solomon had nothing to do with his moral character or perceptions; and that, although he *possessed* the most wisdom, he was not in his *use* of it the wisest of men, appears to be precisely that which the Scriptural narrative intended to convey. Nor is the world without other eminent instances in which vast attainments, and a strength and grasp of intellect before which the most hidden things of physical and moral nature lay open and bare, have been united with much weakness of heart and great deficiency in the moral sense. This view does not therefore in the least degree interfere with the conviction that—"God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart,† even as the sand that is upon the sea-shore. For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman and Chalcol and Darda, the sons of Mahol: and his fame was in all nations round about. And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five. And he spake of trees, from the cedar-tree that is in Lebanon to the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes. And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom."‡

Among these, there is one whose visit is more particularly mentioned than any other. This was the Queen of Sheba. And the distinguished notice which her visit has obtained is probably on account of the greater distance from which she came, and the greater glory which therefrom redounded to Solomon, the fame of whose wisdom brought her, with royal offerings, from her far distant land. That land is supposed to have been Abyssinia; and as the fleets of Solomon, which passed through the Red Sea, may, with the greatest probability, be presumed to have touched and traded at the eastern ports of Africa, it is easy to see through what channels she might have heard of the glory and wisdom of the Hebrew king. She came with a very great and splendid retinue; and in her train were camels laden with spices, gold, and precious stones. In her interviews with Solomon she "tried him with hard questions,"—a mode of testing "wisdom" which was common in that age, and which, indeed, every one who made unusual pretensions to knowledge and sagacity was understood to invite. Solomon was familiar with this exercise, for doubtless other illustrious visitors had tried his wisdom in the same manner; and Josephus expressly says that before this there had been much passing of "hard questions" to and fro between him and Hiram king of Tyre. He readily solved all the difficulties which the royal stranger proposed; and we are told that, "When the queen

* In the book of Ecclesiastes; the only book in the canonical Scriptures which lays claim to a *philosophical* character.
† *We* should say *head* or *intellect*. The Hebrews made the *heart* the seat of intellect, and the *bowels* the seat of feeling.
‡ 1 Kings iv. 29—34.



[Journey of an Abyssinian Queen.]

of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom, and the house which he had built, and the food of his table, and the station of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, with their apparel, and his cup-bearers, and his burnt-offerings which he offered in the house of Jehovah, there was no more spirit in her, and she said to the king, 'True was the report which I heard in my own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. Yet that report I believed not until I came, and saw with mine own eyes; and lo, the half had not been told me: thy wisdom and greatness far exceed the report that I heard. Happy thy men! happy these thy servants who stand continually before thee and hear thy wisdom. Blessed be Jehovah thy God, who was so pleased with thee as to set thee on the throne of Israel."*

Being now satisfied, the queen presented Solomon with the precious things she had brought with her. The gold alone was not less than one hundred and twenty talents,† and with respect to the spices, it is remarked that "there came no more such abundance of spices as those which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon." Suitable returns were made by him; and the queen returned to her own country. The native annals of Abyssinia not only claim this princess for their queen, but ascribe to this visit the very important consequence of the introduction of Judaism into that country. And it is certainly worthy of notice that to inquire into the Jewish religion, no less than to witness the wisdom and greatness of Solomon, seems to be stated as the object of her journey, for it is said that it was in consequence of her having "heard of the fame of Solomon, *and of the name of Jehovah*," that this journey was undertaken.

The glory of Solomon's reign was grievously dimmed towards its conclusion. It will be observed that he had not only transgressed the law by "multiplying wives unto himself," but had taken a considerable proportion of them from the neighbouring idolatrous and adverse nations, with whom the Israelites generally had been interdicted from contracting any alliance,

* 1 Kings x. 4—9.

† Worth 720,000.

on the ground that such connections might turn their hearts to idols. The case of Solomon evinced in the strongest manner the wisdom and foresight of this interdiction; for even he, in the doating attachment of his latter days to the "fair idolatresses" in his harem, not only tolerated the public exercise of their idolatrous worship, but himself erected high places for the worship of "Ashtaroth, the goddess of the Sidonians; of Chemosh, the god of the Moabites; and of Molech, the abominable idol of the Ammonites," on the hills opposite to and overlooking that splendid temple which he had commenced his reign by building to Jehovah. The contrast of these two acts, at the opposite extremities of his reign, offers as striking a "vanity" as any of those on which he expatiates in his book. In the end, his fall was rendered complete by his own participation, by the act of sacrifice, in the worship of these idols. This great and astonishing offence is, with sufficient probability, reckoned by Abulfaragi to have taken place about the thirty-fourth year of Solomon's reign, and the fifty-fourth of his age. By this fall he forfeited the benefits and privileges which had been promised on the condition of his obedience and rectitude. It was not long before the doom which he had so weakly and wilfully incurred was made known to him. This was that the kingdom should be *rent* from him and given to his servant. Nevertheless, in judgment remembering mercy, the Lord said that this great evil should not occur during his time, but under his son. This was for David's sake; and, for his sake also, who had derived so much satisfaction from the promised perpetuity of his race in the throne, his house should still reign over one tribe, that of Judah, with which Benjamin had now coalesced. How this intimation was received by Solomon, and what effect it produced upon him, we are not told.

Soon after, the same intimation was conveyed to an able and spirited young Ephraimite, named Jeroboam. This person had so much distinguished himself by his diligence and ability in an inferior employment as to attract the notice of the king, who promoted him to the high and responsible office of intendant of the imposts levied from the two tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. At the time when his duties in the provinces required him to leave Jerusalem, a prophet named Abijah met him in the way, and, seizing the new mantle which he wore, *rent* it into twelve pieces, of which he gave to him ten. This significant action he then proceeded to explain, in correspondence with the intimation which had been given to Solomon. The new mantle of the kingdom was to be rent after the death of the king, when only two parts, or tribes, should remain to the house of David, and Jehovah would give the other ten to Jeroboam, and confirm the dominion to his race if it continued in obedience. The mind of Jeroboam was well suited to grasp the prospect thus opened to him. But it appears that he allowed the communication to transpire; for it came to the ears of Solomon, who then sought to intercept the appointment by putting him to death. But he had timely warning and fled to Shishak, the king of Egypt, who protected him; and there he remained until Solomon died.

Egypt had long before afforded refuge to two persons, who now, in their own countries, occasioned much trouble to Solomon, and more afterwards to his successor. The first of these was Hadad, of the royal family of Edom. He was a little boy when that country was conquered for David by Joab; and some faithful adherents then contrived to escape with him to Egypt, where Pharaoh gave him a house, appointed a regular provision for his household, and bestowed lands upon him; and when he grew up bestowed upon him in marriage the sister of the queen, by whom he had a son, who was brought up among the sons of the Egyptian king. But ease and honours could not divert Hadad from the remembrance of his native land, his lost kingdom, and the slaughter of all his house. Burning with high purposes of ambition and vengeance, and of restoring the independence of Edom, he sought, and with considerable difficulty obtained, permission of Pharaoh to return to his own country. The attempts which he then made to recover his kingdom occasioned considerable trouble in the latter part of Solomon's reign; but the strong garrisons which David had left in Edom, and which Solomon maintained there, prevented them from being successful. When his case appeared hopeless in this quarter he went, with such as he could persuade to follow his fortunes, and joined himself to Rezin, who had already occasioned considerable disturbance to Solomon's power in

Syria. This Rezin had been a commander under Hadadrezer, that king of Zobah whom David overthrew. It seems that he had drawn off the force under his command, and directed it to the pursuit of his own ambitious projects. At first he led with his men that wild life of predatory warfare, of which there are so many examples in the Bible history of ancient times; but he gradually acquired a settled power over a portion of Syria, and ultimately established a kingdom, of which Damascus was the capital; and this, of course, he could not do but at some loss and disadvantage to Solomon, especially by interrupting the communications with Tadmor.

From this person Hadad and his adherents experienced a good reception; obtained assistance in establishing themselves in another and neighbouring portion of Syria. And when Rezin died, Hadad (by what means or on what grounds we know not) obtained possession of his dominions also, thus becoming the virtual founder of that important kingdom of Damascene-Syria in which, in future years, the Hebrew nation often found a persevering and formidable opponent. Hadad was for his kingly qualities so much honoured by his successors, that his name became a very common one among them, if, indeed, it were not made an official one, like that of Pharaoh in Egypt. The histories of Hadad and Rezin, and the parts which they took, severally or conjointly, in the foundation of the kingdom of Damascene-Syria, is involved in much obscurity and doubt, amidst which the account which has been now given seems the best that can be gathered from the circumstances on record.

Whether Solomon ultimately repented of his offences, and was reconciled to God, is a question which is involved in some doubt. If he did repent, it is a matter of surprise that there is not the least intimation of so interesting and important a circumstance, either in the books of Kings and Chronicles, or in Josephus. That also none of the punishments of his crime were averted has been used as an argument against his repentance; but to this we are not disposed to allow much weight, for if the repentance of David for his acts of adultery and murder did not avert the punishments denounced against him, how much less might we expect it to do so in the case of idolatry—which was, in fact, treason against the king Jehovah —a *public* crime committed by a person whose example, both from his high station and his character for wisdom, was calculated to have the most dangerous effect,—while that station and character rendered it pre-eminently his duty to set the contrary example of fidelity to the Great King. We therefore conclude that, whatever benefit repentance might have brought to his own soul, we are not to suppose that it would have averted the public punishment of a public crime. If a man commits a murder and repents, his repentance creates the hope of future benefit to his own soul: but, in this world, his punishment from the law is the same as if he had not repented.

Nevertheless, it has been charitably concluded that Solomon did repent; and this conclusion is founded on the book of Ecclesiastes, which is supposed to have been written after that repentance. Yet whoever looks at that book dispassionately will see little to support that conclusion. There appears to us nothing in those views of life and of the dispensations of Providence which it contains, which might not have occurred to his sagacious mind before as well as after his offence. All the *experience* to which he therein refers, we *know* to have been obtainable by him *before* his fall; while it is equally true that the book itself contains not the slightest allusion to his offence, or even to idolatry in general, although that "vanity of vanities" is the one to which he must have been the most acutely sensible, had he been in the supposed state of repentance when that book was written. The result is, that this appears to be a question on which we have no evidence on either side, and on which it is therefore best not to form *any* opinion.

Solomon died in the year 990 B.C., after he had reigned forty years and lived about sixty. With all his glory he was but little lamented by his subjects, for reasons which will now be obvious to the reader. Indeed, a great part of the nation may appear to have regarded his death with a secret satisfaction, on account of the prospect which it offered of a release from the heavy imposts which the king had found it necessary to inflict for the support of his costly

establishments. The more the splendour of Solomon's reign is considered, the more its illusive and insubstantial character will appear, whether we inquire for its effect upon the real welfare of the nation, or even upon the permanent grandeur of the crown. Its utter disproportion to the permanent means and resources of the state is strikingly and sufficiently evinced by the fact that, so far from any of his successors supporting or restoring the magnificence of his court, the quantities of gold which he had lavished upon his various works and utensils gradually disappeared to the last fragment, and served but as a treasure on which succeeding kings drew until it was entirely exhausted.

Of the children of Solomon history has only preserved the name of one son, Rehoboam, his destined successor, and one daughter named Taphath.* Rehoboam was the son of an Ammonitish mother, and being born the year before his father's accession to the throne, was of course upwards of forty years of age when that father died.

The effects of the arbitrary policy and inordinate expense which had prevailed in the court of Solomon during the last years of his reign, began to appear as soon as his death was announced. The rulers of the tribes assembled at the city of Shechem, in the tribe of Ephraim,—which tribe, it will be remembered, was always disposed to regard with strong jealousy the superiority of Judah. Here they wished to enter into a new stipulation with the heir to the throne—a precaution which had been neglected under the excitement and extraordinary circumstances which attended the accession of Solomon. If Rehoboam had been wise, the place which had been chosen for this congress, and the presence of Jeroboam,—who had hastened from Egypt when he heard of Solomon's death, and took a prominent part in the present matter,—were circumstances which, among others, might have apprised him that the occasion was one of no ordinary moment, and required the most careful and skilful management. Rehoboam was not equal to this crisis; for when the rulers demanded, as the condition of their submission, that he should abrogate a portion of the burdens which his father had imposed upon them, he failed to discern what might be gained by a ready and cheerful concession, and required three days on which to deliberate on their demand. In this time he decided to reject the counsel of the older and more prudent counsellors, who enforced the necessity of compliance with this demand, and chose rather to adopt the advice of the young and headstrong courtiers—warm advocates of the royal prerogative,—who exhorted him to overawe the remonstrants by his majesty, and to drive them back like yelping dogs to their kennels. Accordingly when the three days had expired, his fatal and foolish answer was, that his little finger should be heavier upon the nation than his father's loins; and that whereas his father had only chastised them with whips, he would chastise them with scorpions. Nothing could more clearly than this answer evince the unfitness of Rehoboam for the crisis which had now occurred, and his utter ignorance of the spirit which was in Israel; while it at the same time indicates the arbitrary notions of the royal prerogative which he found occasion to imbibe during the later years of his father's reign.

On receiving this answer ten of the tribes instantly renounced their allegiance to the house of David, and chose Jeroboam for their king. Two of the tribes, Judah and Benjamin, alone adhered to Rehoboam,—Judah had the good reason that the family of David was of their tribe; and both these tribes were advantaged by the presence of the metropolis on their respective borders, and had necessarily derived peculiar benefits from that profuse expenditure of the late king of which the other tribes had cause to complain.

Thus was the great and powerful empire which David had erected, and which Solomon had ruled, already divided into two very unequal parts. Jeroboam had ten of the tribes, and his dominion extended over the tributary nations eastward, towards the Euphrates; while Rehoboam only retained the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, which are henceforth, from their strict identity of interest, to be regarded as one tribe, under the name of Judah. To this division belonged also the subject territories of Philistia and Edom. But notwithstanding the more than equal figure which this kingdom makes in the further history of the Hebrew

* 1 Kings iv. 11.

nation, it may be well to bear in mind that what is henceforth to be called the kingdom of Judah, ruled by the house of David, formed not above a fourth part of the dominions of Solomon.

Rehoboam was not disposed to submit quietly to this proceeding. At first, affecting to suppose that his authority over the ten tribes would still be recognised, he sent, at the usual season, the officer who was "over the tribute" to collect the taxes which had been exacted in the last years of his father's reign. But the people rose, and testified their indignation and defiance by stoning this obnoxious personage to death. On this Rehoboam resolved to attempt to reduce the revolted tribes to his obedience by force of arms, and collected a large army for that purpose. But when the prophet Shemaiah announced to him the Lord's command to relinquish this enterprise, he manifested some sense of his true position by disbanding his army. This, it must be allowed, was a signal example of submission, and may intimate that when thus reminded of it he became sensible of the propriety of the requisition. No definite treaty of peace was, however, concluded, and the frontiers of the two kingdoms continued to present an hostile aspect.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES.

(1) INAUGURATION OF KINGS, p. 503.—We may be spared the necessity for much incidental explanation by introducing the following from Jahn's 'Archæologia Biblica':—

"By the anointing of the Jewish kings we are to understand the same as their inauguration; inasmuch as anointing was the principal ceremony on such an occasion.*

"We are informed however by the Scriptures that *unction*, as a sign of investiture with the royal authority, was bestowed only upon the two first kings who ruled the Hebrews, namely Saul and David; and subsequently upon Solomon and Joash, who ascended the throne under such circumstances that there was danger of their right to the succession being forcibly disputed.† That the ceremony of anointing should be repeated in every instance of succession to the throne, was probably not considered necessary, as the unction which the first one who held the sceptre in any particular line of princes had received might be supposed to suffice for the succeeding incumbents in the same descent.

"In the kingdom of *Israel*, those who were inducted into the royal office appear to have been inaugurated with additional ceremonies.‡ The private anointings performed by the prophets § were only prophetic symbols or intimations that the persons who were thus anointed should eventually govern the kingdom. Without the consent, however, of the rulers of the nation, (of the public legislative assembly,) they communicated no legal right to the crown; no more than the prophecies of dissentions and civil wars could justify tumult and rebellion.*

"*The ceremonies mentioned in the Bible, which were customary at the inauguration of kings, were as follow:—*

"I. The king, surrounded with soldiers, was conducted into some public place, (in the later ages into the temple) and was there anointed by the high-priest with the sacred oil. No mention is made in the Scriptures of anointing the kings of Israel, when that kingdom was separated from the kingdom of Judah; which arose from the rulers of the former not having any of the sacred oil in their possession.† We see in this ceremony the ground of the epithet *anointed*, which is applied to kings; and a reason also (the Hebrew kings being virtually vicegerents of Jehovah, and appointed by his authority) why they were denominated the anointed of, that is, by the Lord.‡ Whether the king was girded with a sword at the time of his accession to the throne is not certain; although by some it is supposed to be alluded to in the forty-fifth Psalm," and we know the customs of the East make girding with the sword of state a principal if not the sole act of inauguration.

"II. It appears from 2 Sam. i. 10; Ps. xlv. 6; and Ezek. xxi. 26, that a sceptre was presented to the monarch at his inauguration and that a diadem was placed upon his head.

* 2 Sam. ii. 4; v. 3.

† 1 Sam. x. 24; 2 Sam. ii. 4; v. 1—3; 1 Chron. xi. 1, 2, 3; 2 Kings xi. 12—12; 2 Chron. xxiii. 1—21.

‡ 2 Kings xi. 13.

§ 2 Kings ix. 13; compare 1 Sam. x. i; xvi. 1—13.

* 1 Kings xi. 29—40; xii. 20; 2 Kings viii. 11—14.

† 1 Kings i. 32—34; 2 Kings xi. 12—20; 2 Chron. xxiii. 1—21; comp. Deut. xvii. 18.

‡ 1 Sam. xxiv. 6—10; xxvi. 9, 11, 16, 23; 2 Sam. xxiii. 1; Ps. ii. 2; lxxxix. 38; Habak. iii. 13, etc.

"III. The covenant, which defined and fixed the principles on which the government was to be conducted, and likewise the laws of Moses, were presented to him; and he took an oath that he would rule in accordance with the covenant and the Mosaic law.* The principal men in the kingdom, the princes, elders, etc., promised obedience on their part, and as a pledge of their determination to perform what they had promised, they kissed, it appears, either the feet or the knees of the person inaugurated.†

"IV. After the ceremonies were completed, the new monarch was conducted into the city with great pomp, amid the acclamations and applauses of the people, and the cries of "*Long live the King!*" accompanied with music and songs of joy. Sacrifices were offered up, and were intended probably, as a confirmation of the oath which had been taken. In the later ages these sacrifices were converted into feasts.‡ There are allusions in many passages of Scripture to the public entrance into cities which took place at the time of the coronation, and to the rejoicings and acclamations on that occasion.§

"V. Finally, the king takes his seat upon the throne and receives the congratulations of the assembled people.‖

"At the accession of Saul to the monarchy, when there was neither diadem, throne nor sceptre, many of these ceremonies were necessarily omitted. Most of them were also omitted in the case of conquest, when the conqueror himself, without consulting the people or the principal men, designated the king for the nation he had subdued, merely gave him another name in token of his new dignity, exacted the oath of fidelity, and signalised the event by a feast."¶

(2) Use of Different kinds of Wood, p. 524.—The following passage from Sir J. G. Wilkinson's curious and valuable work on the Ancient Egyptians contains information not obtainable from any other source; and although Palestine possessed many native woods which Egypt had not, much of it must be equally applicable to the former country, particularly the statement with reference to the use of rare foreign woods, which were so extensively imported into Palestine in the time of Solomon:—

* 1 Sam. x. 25; 2 Sam. v. 3; 1 Chron. xi. 3; 2 Kings xi. 12; 2 Chron. xxiii. 1—21.

† Ps. ii. 12.

‡ 1 Kings i. 11. 19, 24, 34, 39, 40; 2 Kings xi. 12, 19; 2 Chron. xxiii. 11; compare Matt. xxi. 1—11; John. xii. 3.

§ Psalm xlvii 2—9; lxxxiii. 1, 2; xcvii. 1; xcix. 1.

‖ 1 Kings i. 36, 48; compare 2 Kings ix. 13; xi. 19.

¶ 2 Kings xxiii. 34; xxiv. 17; 2 Chron. xxxvi 4.

"Egypt produced little wood; and, with the exception of the date and doum palms, the sycamore, tamarisk, and acacias, few trees of native growth afforded timber either for building or for ornamental purposes.

"Of the date-palm, the trunk served for beams, either entire or split in half; of the *gereet*, or branches, were (and are) made wicker baskets, bedsteads, coops, and ceilings of rooms, answering every purpose for which laths, or other thin wood-work might be required. The wood of the doum-palm being much more compact and solid than that of the date-tree, was found to answer as well for rafts and other purposes connected with water as for beams and rafters.

"For coffins, boxes, tables, doors, and other objects, which required large and thick planks, for idols and wooden statues, the sycamore was principally employed......The tamarisk was preferred for the handles of tools, wooden hoes, and other things requiring a hard and compact wood; and of the acacia were made the planks and masts of boats, the handles of offensive weapons of war, and various articles of furniture. Besides the *sont* or Acacia (Mimosa) Nilotica, other acacias which grew in Egypt were also adapted to various purposes; and some instances are met with of the wood of the *eqleeq*. or *balanites Ægyptiaca*, and of different desert trees having been used by the Egyptian carpenters. For ornamental purposes, and sometimes even for coffins, doors, and boxes, foreign woods were employed. Deal and cedar were imported from Syria, and part of the contributions exacted from the conquered tribes of Ethiopia and Asia consisted in ebony, and other rare woods, which were annually brought by the chiefs deputed to present their country's tribute to the Egyptian monarchs.

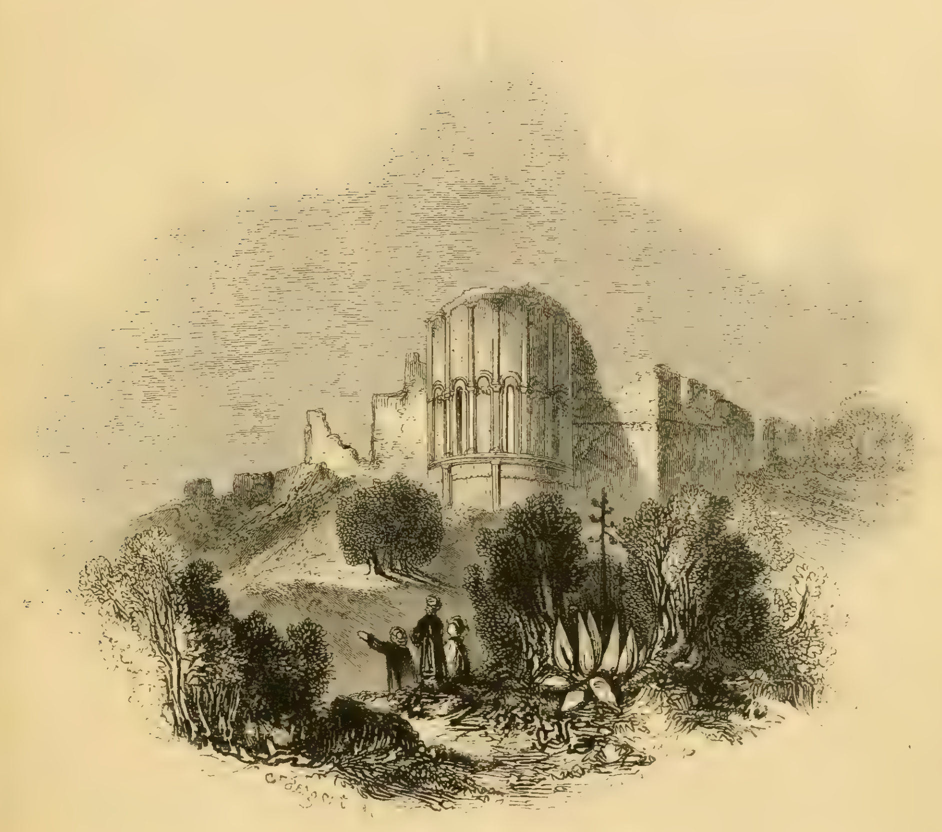
"Boxes, tables, chairs, sofas, and other pieces of furniture, were frequently made of ebony, inlaid with ivory, sycamore, and acacia were veneered with thin layers, or ornamented with carved devices, of rare wood, applied, or let into them; and a fondness for this display suggested to the Egyptians the art of painting common boards, to imitate foreign varieties, so generally adopted at the present day.

"The colours were usually applied on a thin coating of stucco, laid smoothly upon the previously prepared wood, and the various knots and grains painted upon this ground indicated the quality of the wood they intended to courterfeit."*

* 'Ancient Egyptians,' Vol. ii. 177, 178; vol. iii. 167—9.

CHAPTER IV.

ISRAEL, FROM 990 B.C. TO 931 B.C.



[Samaria (Sebaste). From Laborde's 'Syria.']

The period which occupies the remaining chapters of the present book "has been hitherto considered as the Gordian knot of Sacred Chronology; the intricacy of which all the chronologers have complained of, but none have been able to unravel. The difficulty of harmonising the reigns of the kings of Judah and Israel together has principally arisen; 1. from the discordance in some of the correspondences in the years of their respective reigns, with the direct lengths of those reigns; and, 2. from not critically determining the duration of the two interregnums, or vacancies, in the succession of the latter kings, so as to make them correspond with the former throughout."*

* Hales, vol. ii. p. 372.

All this has been adjusted and harmonised by Dr. Hales in the following Table, on data which he has fully explained in his 'Analysis:'—

Kings of Judah.				Kings of Israel.			
	Names.	Years.	B. C.		Names.	Years.	B. C.
1	Rehoboam	17	990	1	Jeroboam	22	990
2	Abijah	3	973	2	Nadab	2	968
3	Asa	41	970	3	Baasha (24)	23	966
4	Jehoshaphat	25	929	4	Elah (2)	1	943
5	Jehoram or Joram	8	904	5	Zimri and Omri (12)	11	942
6	Ahaziah	1	896	6	Ahab	22	931
7	Queen Athaliah	6	895	7	Ahaziah	2	909
8	Joash or Jehoash	40	889	8	Jehoram or Joram	12	907
9	Amaziah	29	849	9	Jehu	28	895
	Interregnum	11	820	10	Jehoahaz	17	867
10	Uzziah or Azariah	52	809	11	Jehoash or Joash	16	850
11	Jotham	16	757	12	Jeroboam II.	41	834
12	Ahaz	16	741		First Interregnum	22	793
13	Hezekiah	29	725	13	Zechariah and Shallum	1	771
14	Manasseh	55	696	14	Menahem	10	770
15	Amon	2	641	15	Pekahiah	2	760
16	Josiah	31	639	16	Pekah	20	758
17	Jehoahaz, three months				Second Interregnum	10	738
18	Jehoiakim	11	608	17	Hoshea	9	728
19	Jehoiachin, three months				Samaria taken	271	719
20	Zedekiah	11	597				
	Jerusalem taken	404	586				

In the preceding history we have seen that Jehovah, from the time of Moses to the death of Solomon, always governed the Hebrews according to the promises and threatenings which he delivered from Mount Horeb. If they deviated from the principle of worshipping Jehovah as the only true God, that is, if they revolted from their lawful king, he brought them by suitable chastisements, to reflect on their obligations, to return to Jehovah, and again to keep sacred the fundamental law of their church and state. The same course we shall find pursued in the government of the two kingdoms. If the monarchs of both had viewed the late great revolution, the sundering of the empire, as a consequence of the idolatrous and unlawful practices of Solomon's court, as a warning (for such it really was) to them not to break the fundamental law of the state, but to govern their subjects according to the law, and to treat them as the subjects of Jehovah; then both kingdoms might have enjoyed uninterrupted prosperity. Even Jeroboam, though he had received no promise of an eternal kingdom, as David had, yet the assurance was given him that if he obeyed the law as David did, the throne should long continue in his family.* But as the kings of both kingdoms often disregarded the fundamental laws of the commonwealth—by idolatry rebelled against their divine sovereign, carried their disorders so far, and treated their subjects in such a manner, that they are aptly described by Isaiah and Ezekiel† under the image of wicked shepherds—there arose a succession of prophets, who, by impressive declarations and symbolic actions, reminded both rulers and subjects of their duties to Jehovah, and threatened them with punishment in case of disobedience.

Even the rebellious backslidings from God which more particularly distinguished the kingdom of Israel did not prevent Jehovah from governing the kingdom according to his law. We shall see in the sequel how he exterminated one after another those royal families who not only retained the arbitrary institutions of Jeroboam, and tolerated and patronised idolatry with

* 1 Kings xi. 37, 38, xii. 21—24; 2 Chron. xi. 1—4, xii. 15.

† Isa. lvi. 9; Ezek. xxxiv.

its concomitant vices, but even introduced and protected it by their royal authority. The extermination of the reigning family he announced beforehand by a prophet, and appointed his successor. We shall see that the higher their corruptions rose, so much the more decisive and striking were the declarations and signs made to show the Israelites that the Lord of the universe was their Lord and King, and that all idols were as nothing when opposed to him. Even Naaman, the Syrian, acknowledged, and the Syrians generally found to their sorrow, that the God of the Hebrews was not a mere national god, but that his power extended over all nations. The history represents a contest between Jehovah, who ought to be acknowledged as God, and the idolatrous Israelites; and everything is ordered to preserve the authority of Jehovah in their minds. At last, after all milder punishments had proved fruitless, these rebellions were followed by the destruction of the kingdom, and the captivity of the people, which had been predicted by Moses, and afterwards by Ahijah, Hosea, Amos, and other prophets.*

We shall also find that the divine Providence was favourable or adverse to the kingdom of Judah, according as the people obeyed or transgressed the law; only here the royal family remained unchanged, according to the promise given to David. We shall here meet indeed with many idolatrous and rebellious kings, but they were always succeeded by those of purer mind, who put a stop to idolatry, re-established theocracy in the hearts of their subjects, and, by the aid of prophets, priests, and Levites, and the services of the temple, restored the knowledge and worship of God. Judah, therefore, although much smaller than Israel, continued her national existence 134 years longer; but at last, as no durable reformation was produced, she experienced the same fate as her sister kingdom, in fulfilment of the predictions of Moses and several other prophets.

The following account of the two kingdoms, therefore, should be viewed as that of a real theocracy; and thus, as a continued execution of the determination of God, that the true religion should be preserved on the earth. In this view it certainly deserves our most attentive study.†

Shechem being one of the most important towns in his own tribe of Ephraim, was made by Jeroboam the metropolis of the new kingdom. He had also a summer residence at Tirzah,‡ in the tribe of Manasseh, which, therefore, seems in the history to share the metropolitan dignity with Shechem.

The new king, little regarding the unconditional promises which had been made to him, applied himself to such operations of human policy as might tend to establish his kingdom, and confirm its separation from that of Judah. Viewing them as measures of policy in the abstract, the praise of much political sagacity and foresight need not be denied to their author; and it is certain that they were successful in promoting the object he had in view. But they were, in his peculiar position, as a king in Israel—that is, a vicegerent of Jehovah, not only improper, but in the highest degree criminal; for they involved an interference with matters far above the prerogative of Jehovah's vassal, and the abrogation of institutions which the Supreme King had established as essential to the good government and subordination of *His* kingdom, with the introduction of other institutions of a nature abhorrent to the Mosaic law, and of a tendency against which that law had most jealously guarded the people. Jeroboam is therefore to be regarded, not as gratuitously and from abstract preference of evil, leading the people into wrong courses; but as being careless whether the course he took were good or evil, so that it tended, in his judgment, to the security of his kingdom; for he had failed to learn that hard truth—that implicit obedience to the behests of his Almighty superior, not tortuous courses of political expediency, offered the true security of his peculiar kingdom.

* Deut. xxviii. 36; 1 Kings xiv. 15; Hosea ix; Amos v.

† The above, following the table, is adopted, with some abridgment, from Jahn, book v. sect. 35.

‡ From the manner in which it is mentioned, Tirzah must have enjoyed a very fine situation, and have made a fair appearance: but even its site is not now known, and that it was in Manasseh is little more than a conjecture. It had been one of the royal cities of the Canaanites (Josh. xii. 24).

Jeroboam was much annoyed at the obligation which the law imposed, of the resort of all the Israelites three times a year to Jerusalem. He clearly perceived that this concourse and frequent meeting of all the tribes to the same place, and for the same object, was a strong uniting circumstance among them; and he feared that the continuance of this usage might ultimately tend to the re-union of the severed kingdoms under the house of David. Undoubtedly it was an awkward circumstance that the subjects of one king should be obliged thus often to resort to the metropolis of a neighbouring and unfriendly monarch; and still more, that his own kingdom should be drained of a considerable portion of its wealth for the support of a service which was exclusively confined to the now adverse metropolis, and for the maintenance of priests and Levites whose services were rendered at Jerusalem, in the presence and under the authority of the rival sovereign. This was a state of things for which, it must be allowed, Jeroboam was under strong and natural inducements to seek a remedy. His *duty* was to have trusted that God, who had promised to continue his kingdom if he were obedient, and who had, indeed, already interposed his authority to prevent Rehoboam from warring against him, would provide a remedy for these difficulties, or take measures to prevent the consequences which he apprehended. But Jeroboam wanted that trust in God which it behoved the vassal of Jehovah to exhibit; and he applied himself to devise measures of his own to meet these exigencies. The measures which he took were so bold and decisive, that they at once took root, and became in their development so interwoven with the political constitution of the country, that even the more pious successors of this king in the throne of Israel did not venture to abolish them or re-establish the authority of the fundamental law.

Under the pretence that Jerusalem was too distant for the resort of his subjects, he established two places of resort at the opposite extremities of his kingdom, the one in the north, at Dan, and the other in the south, at Bethel. Both of these places, it will be remembered, had been previously places of public resort,—Bethel as a place of sacred stones,* and Dan on account of the ephod and teraphim which the Danites had reft from Micah and established in that place.† Then, to give this resort an object, he established at these places golden or gilded calves, in unquestionable imitation of the Apis and Mnevis of the Egyptians, among whom he had spent the years of his exile. We are not at all to suppose that he intended to introduce the worship of other gods. These images were doubtless intended as symbols of Jehovah; and the worship rendered before them was held to be in his honour. But on account of the danger of idolatry, the use of all such symbols had been interdicted by the fundamental law of the state; and the use in particular of this very symbol of a golden calf, to which, from Egyptian contaminations, the Israelites were (as Jeroboam must have known) more attached than to any other, had in former times brought signal punishment upon the Hebrews in the wilderness. It was, then, not the worship of other gods, but the worship of the true God in an irregular, dangerous, and interdicted manner, which constituted the crime of Jeroboam, who "sinned and made Israel to sin."

Nor did the irregularities end here. Jeroboam made his system a complete one. He not only changed the *place* of concourse to the people, but also altered the *time*, directing that all the festivals should be observed a month later than the law commanded, an alteration by which considerable confusion must have been at first produced, as the law had appointed these festivals with a reference to the seasons of the year. For this new worship, temples and altars were erected at Dan and Bethel, and to its support the tithes and other sacerdotal dues accruing within the ten tribes were directed; thus at once cutting off the greater part of the income of the establishment of Jerusalem. It is probable that this wealth might still have been retained by the Levites whose cities were within the limits of the kingdom, and by such of the Aaronic priests as might have chosen to conform to the new order of things. But to the eternal honour of this much calumniated body, they all refused to sanction these

* See before, at p. 360, 408. † See before, at p. 369.

proceedings, or to take any part in such violation of the Divine law; in consequence of which they not only forfeited the dues which had afforded them subsistence in the ten tribes, but found it prudent and necessary to abandon also the cities which belonged to them in those tribes, and withdraw into the kingdom of Judah. There they were cheerfully received, although the two tribes forming that kingdom, thus became burdened with the whole charge which had hitherto been shared among twelve tribes. This fact is very valuable, as showing that the Levitical tribe had conciliated, and was entitled to, the esteem and respect of the people. In the end many persons belonging to the other tribes, who disapproved of Jeroboam's innovations, and were disposed to maintain their own fidelity to the spirit of the Mosaical institutions, followed the example of the Levites, and withdrew into the kingdom of Judah. It is not necessary to point out how seriously these migrations lessened the true strength of Jeroboam's kingdom and increased that of his rival.

Jeroboam was thus left to establish a new priesthood for his new worship. Priests were accordingly appointed from all the tribes indiscriminately; but as to the important office of high-priest, his prudence and ambition suggested its annexation to the crown, as was the case in Egypt and some other heathen countries.

Jehovah was not slow in manifesting his displeasure at these proceedings. At one of the periodical feasts (that of Tabernacles), the time for which had been altered by him, Jeroboam was discharging the priestly act of offering incense on the altar at Bethel,* when a prophet of God from Judah appeared on the spot, and denounced destruction upon this altar, to be executed by a future king of Judah, Josiah by name; and in proof of his mission, announced that it should even now receive such a crack that its ashes should be scattered abroad. Hearing this, the king stretched forth his hand to seize the prophet, when his arm stiffened in the act, and could not be again drawn back, until the prophet himself interceded with God for him. At the same time the altar was rent, and the ashes strewed abroad, as the prophet had said.

This message seems to have produced no good effect either on the king or the people; and this may have been partly owing to the misconduct of the prophet himself; for after having publicly declared that he was forbidden to eat or drink in Bethel, or to make any stay there, he allowed himself, after having departed, to be imposed upon and brought back, and to be feasted in Bethel, by a sort of Baalamite prophet; for which he was slain by a lion on his return home, and his body was brought back and buried in Bethel. As the prophet had thus acted against his own avowed orders, and had in consequence been destroyed with manifest marks of the Divine displeasure, the occasion was doubtless taken to diminish the credit and effect of the mission with which he had been charged.

Jeroboam lived to see three kings upon the throne of Judah. There arose a skirmishing warfare between the two kingdoms in the latter years of Rehoboam; and in the reign of his successor the war was brought to a great pitched battle, the result of which was adverse to Jeroboam. In the latter years of his reign the prophet Ahijah, who had originally communicated the Divine appointment to him, was commissioned to denounce the death of his most hopeful son, Abijah, about whose sickness the wife of Jeroboam went to consult him in disguise. The prophet, though blind with age, knew her by the prophetic impulse which came upon him; and he not only told her this, but declared the approaching destruction of Jeroboam's race by a succeeding king of Israel; and also announced the ultimate captivity of the tribes of Israel beyond the Euphrates for their manifold iniquities.

Jeroboam himself died in the year 968, B.C., after a reign of twenty-two years.

His son Nadab ascended the throne in the second year of Asa, king of Judah. He reigned two years, during which he adhered to the system of his father, and at the end of which an intimate of his own, named Baasha, of the tribe of Issachar, conspired against him and slew him as he was laying siege to Gibbethon, a fortress which the Philistines retained in their

* See the figure of an Egyptian king performing the same priestly function, at p. 239.

possession. According to the policy of the East, Baasha having slain the head of the house of Jeroboam, hastened to destroy all its other members, who might prove disturbers of his safety in the throne. Thus was the denunciation of the prophet Ahijah against the house of Jeroboam speedily accomplished.

The government of Baasha proved not only offensive to God but oppressive to the people, on both which grounds great numbers of the subjects of this kingdom sought repose in that of Judah. It was probably partly in consequence of the alarm which this constant migration of his people produced, that Baasha entered into a skirmishing warfare with Asa king of Judah, and ultimately laid siege to, and took the town of Ramah, seven miles to the north of Jerusalem, which he began to rebuild and fortify, with the view of leaving a garrison in it to check the communication with Jerusalem, and to become a point from which excursions might be made into the kingdom of Judah. This bold proceeding occasioned much alarm in Judah; but instead of opposing it by force of arms, king Asa collected all the gold he could find in his own treasury, *and that of the temple*, and sent it to Ben-Hadad, the king of Syria, to induce him to make a diversion in his favour. Accordingly the Syrians fell upon the north of Israel, and took all the fenced cities of Naphtali; which obliged Baasha to relinquish his enterprise in the south, and march to the defence of his own territories.

Time only confirmed Baasha in the evil courses which had proved the ruin of the house of Jeroboam; in consequence of which a prophet, named Jehu, the son of another prophet called Hanani, was sent to declare for his house the same doom which he had himself been the agent of inflicting upon that of Jeroboam.

Baasha died in 966, B.C., after a reign of twenty-three years.

After the death of Baasha, Israel became the prey of a series of sanguinary revolutions. His son Elah remained only two years on the throne, at the expiration of which he was assassinated during a feast by one of his generals, of the name of Zimri, who then assumed the crown. Zimri, during the few days of his reign, found time to extirpate the whole family of his predecessor, thus accomplishing upon the house of Baasha the doom which the prophet had declared.

The army, which was engaged against the Philistines, no sooner heard of the murder of their king than they declared in favour of Omri, their own commander, and proclaimed him king. This new king immediately marched with all his forces against his rival, and used such diligence that he shut him up in the summer capital of Tirzah. Zimri made no resistance, but fled to his harem, which he set on fire, and perished in the flames. He had reigned only seven days; and this signal and speedy end gave occasion to the proverb in Israel, "Had Zimri peace, who slew his master?"

Omri had another competitor: for while the army had elected him, a portion of the people, equally disgusted at the deed of Zimri, had made Tibni king. The kingdom was thus split into factions, and it was only after a civil war of six years that the faction of Omri prevailed, and Tibni was put to death. Omri reigned above five years after this. He was more guilty before God than any of his predecessors, for he appears to have taken measures to turn into actual idolatry that which under the former kings had only been an irregular and interdicted form of worship and service. Finding some disadvantages in the situation of Tirzah, however pleasant, for a metropolis, Omri purchased a hill of a person called Samar for two talents of silver (750*l*.), and built thereon a city, which, after the name of the previous owner of the site, he called SAMARIA,(¹) and made it the capital of his dominion. So well was the situation chosen, that the city remained the metropolis of the kingdom while the kingdom endured, and was still a place of importance when the Hebrews ceased the second time to be a nation. There are some respects in which its site is deemed by travellers preferable to that of Jerusalem.

After his reign of eleven completed years, counted as twelve in the Scriptures, because he had entered on the twelfth, Omri died in the year 931, B.C., being the thirty-ninth year of Asa king of Judah.

CONTEMPORARY KINGS.

Kings of Israel.		Kings of Judah.	
Jeroboam	B.C. 990	Rehoboam	B.C. 990
—	—	Abijah	973
—	—	Asa	970
Nadab	968	—	—
Baasha	966	—	—
Elah	943	—	—
Zimri	942	—	—
Omri	942	—	—
Died	931	Died	929

NOTE ON SAMARIA.

(1) SAMARIA, p. 552.—The text to which this note is appended sufficiently indicates the origin of Samaria. It remained the capital of Israel until the ruin of that kingdom by the Assyrians, after which it became the chief seat of the people whom the king of Assyria planted in the desolated country, and who are hence in the subsequent history known by the name of Samaritans. Between them and the restored Jews there was always a bitter and not always bloodless enmity, which subsisted down to the extinction of the Hebrew commonwealth. The town was utterly destroyed by Hyrcanus the king-priest of the Jews, in the year 129 B.C.; and in this state it remained until the time of Herod the Great, who, being much pleased with its situation, rebuilt it in a very beautiful manner, and gave it the name of *Sebaste*, a Greek word equivalent to the Latin *Augusta*, in honour of the Emperor Augustus. Under this name it continued to flourish until the Jews were finally expelled from Palestine by the Emperor Adrian, after which the place went gradually to decay; and at present the inhabited part of the site forms a mean and miserably poor village, named Subusta, containing not more than thirty dwellings.

"The situation," says Dr. Richardson, "is exceedingly beautiful, and strong by nature, more so, I think, than Jerusalem. It stands on a fine large insulated hill,* compassed all round by a broad deep valley; and when fortified, as it is stated to have been, by Herod, one would have imagined that in the ancient system of warfare nothing but famine would have reduced such a place. The valley is surrounded by four hills, one on each side, which are cultivated in terraces to the top, sown with grain, and planted with fig and olive trees, as is also the valley. The hill of Samaria itself, likewise, rises in terraces to a height equal to any of the adjoining mountains."

* The hill is semi-spherical.—*Elliot*.

The first view of the place, even in its present state, is highly imposing. And there are sufficient remains of Herod's city to enforce the impressions which the history of the site has prepared the mind to receive. These however consist chiefly of numerous limestone columns, still standing, on the upper part of the hill, but without their capitals. Hardy counted eighty that were standing, besides many that lay prostrate. There are also some remains of fortifications; but the most conspicuous ruin is that which appears in the cut at the head of the chapter. This was a large church, attributed to the Empress Helena, and said to have been built over the dungeon in which John the Baptist was confined and afterwards beheaded by order of Herod. This cave or dungeon is still pointed out; besides which there are under the church several vaults which probably opened into the sides of the hill. The building itself is in a very elaborate but fantastic style of architecture; the columns used in which are of no known order, although the capitals approach nearer to the Corinthian than to any other. The east end, with its pentagonal projection, is nearly perfect, confirming a remark of Maundrell, that if any portion of a church is left standing in these parts it is sure to be the eastern end.

CHAPTER V.

JUDAH, FROM B.C. 990 TO B.C. 929.



[Mount Zion. From a drawing by F. Arundale, Esq.]

EXCEPT in its first act, the commencement of Rehoboam's reign was not blameworthy, nor, as it respects his separate kingdom, unprosperous. In those days the wealth and welfare of a state was deemed to consist in a numerous population; and of this kind of strength the kingdom of Judah received large additions by migration from that of Israel, through the defection of the Levitical body, and the discontent with which a large and valuable portion of the population regarded the arbitrary innovations of Jeroboam. It may indeed be, in a great degree, imputed to this cause, that, although so much inferior in territorial extent, the kingdom of Judah appears throughout the history of the two kingdoms to be at least equal to that of Israel.

Rehoboam, seeing that he had an adverse kingdom so near at hand, employed the first years of his reign in putting his dominions in a condition of defence. He built and fortified a considerable number of places in Judah and Benjamin, which he stored well with arms and victuals, and in which he placed strong garrisons. For three years he remained faithful to the principles of the theocracy, and received a full measure of the prosperity which had been promised to such obedience. But when he beheld himself, as he deemed, secure and prosperous in his kingdom, his rectitude, which appears never to have been founded on very strong principles, gave way. It was not long before the acts which stained the later years of his father were more than equalled by him. Not only was idolatry openly tolerated and

practised, but also the abominable acts, outrageous even to the mere instincts of morality, which some of these idolatries sanctioned or required. Thus the abominations of Judah very soon exceeded those of Israel. And we shall, throughout the historical period on which we have entered, observe one very important distinction in the religious (which, according to the spirit of the Hebrew institutions, means also the political) condition of the two kingdoms. Israel rested with tolerable uniformity in a sort of intermediate system between the true religion and idolatry, with enough of elementary truth to preserve some show of fidelity to the system, and enough of idolatry and human invention to satisfy the corrupt tendencies of the age and country. Hence, while, on the one hand, it never, under its best kings, reached that purity of adherence to the Mosaical system which was sometimes exemplified in the sister kingdom ; so, on the other, it never, or very rarely, fell to those depths of iniquity to which Judah sometimes sunk under its more wicked and weak kings. For Judah, resting on no such intermediate point as had been found in Israel, was in a state of constant oscillation between the *extremes* of good and evil.

In the case of Rehoboam, the loose principles which prevailed at the latter end of his father's reign, together with the fact that the mother, from whom his first ideas had been imbibed, was an Ammonitess, may partly account for the extreme facility of his fall. Indeed, with reference to the latter fact, it may be observed that among the kings there is scarcely one known to be son of a foreign and consequently idolatrous mother, who did not fall into idolatry,—a circumstance which is sufficient alone to explain and justify the policy by which such connections were forbidden.

The chastisement of Rehoboam and his people was not long delayed. It was inflicted by the Egyptians, who, in the fifth year of Rehoboam, invaded the land under Shishak their king, in such strong force as intimated the expectation of a more formidable resistance than was encountered ; or rather, perhaps, was designed to shorten the war by overawing opposition. There were 1200 chariots, 60,000 horsemen, and a vast body of infantry, the latter composed chiefly from the subject nations of Lybia and Ethiopia. Shishak took with ease the fenced cities on which Rehoboam had placed so much reliance; and when he appeared before Jerusalem, that city appears to have opened its gates to him. Here he reaped the first-fruits of that rich spoil, from the gold of the temple and of the palace, which supplied so many subsequent demands. In the extremity of distress, while the city was in the hands of an insulting conqueror, who stripped the most sacred places of their costly ornaments and wealth, the king of Judah and his people turned repentingly to God, and implored deliverance from his hand. He heard them; and inclined Shishak to withdraw with the rich spoil he had gained, without attempting to retain permanent possession of his conquest. Astonished himself at the facility with which that conquest had been made, this king despised the people who had submitted so unresistingly to his arms, and, according to the testimony of Herodotus,* cited by Josephus himself, he erected, at different points on his march home, triumphal columns charged with emblems very little to the honour of the nation which had not opposed him.



[Shishak, king of Egypt. Thebes.]

Although it is difficult to assign a specific reason, beyond a conqueror's thirst for spoil, for this invasion of the dominions of the son by a power which had been so friendly to the father, it does not strike us, as it does some writers, that the difficulty is increased by the fact of the matrimonial alliance which Solomon had formed with the royal family of Egypt. Rehoboam

* Herod., i. 105.

was born before that alliance was contracted, and he and his mother were not likely to be regarded with much favour by the Egyptian princess or her family. Indeed it would seem that *she* had died, or her influence had declined, or her friends deemed her wronged, before the latter end of Solomon's reign; for it is evident that the king of Egypt, this very Shishak, was not on the most friendly terms with Solomon, since he granted his favour and protection to the fugitive Jeroboam, whose prospective pretensions to divide the kingdom with the son of Solomon forms the only apparent ground of the distinction with which he was treated. This circumstance may direct attention to what appears to us the greater probability, that the expedition was undertaken at the suggestion of Jeroboam, who had much cause to be alarmed at the defection of his subjects to Rehoboam, and at the diligence which that king employed in strengthening his kingdom. The rich plunder which was to be obtained would, when pointed out, be an adequate inducement to the enterprise.

The severe lesson administered by this invasion to Rehoboam and his people was not in vain, for we read no more of idolatrous abominations during the eleven remaining years of this reign. In consequence, these were rather prosperous years for the kingdom; and, save a few skirmishes with the king of Israel, we learn of no troubles by which it was, during these years, disturbed. But, like his father, Rehoboam "desired many wives." His harem contained eighteen wives and sixty concubines,—a number which, we cannot doubt, was much opposed to the notions of the Hebrew people, although it seems rather moderate as compared with the establishment of Solomon, or those which we still find among the kings of the East. Of all his wives, the one Rehoboam loved the most was Maachah, a daughter (or grand-daughter*) of Absalom. Her son, Abijah, he designed for his successor in the throne: to ensure which object, he made adequate provision for his other sons while he lived, and prudently separated them from each other, by dispersing them through his dominions as governors of the principal towns. This policy was successful; for although this king had twenty-eight sons, besides three-score daughters, his settlement of the crown was not disputed at his death. This event took place in the year 973 B.C., in the eighteenth year of his reign.

Abijah, otherwise called Abijam, succeeded his father, and the first public act of his short reign appears to justify the preference which had been given to him. Jeroboam, whose policy it was to harass and weaken the house of David, and to render the two kingdoms as inimical to each other as possible, thought the succession of the new king, young and inexperienced, a favourable opportunity for an aggressive movement. He seems therefore to have made a general military levy, which amounted to the prodigious number of 800,000 men. Abijah when he heard of this formidable muster was not discouraged, but, although he could raise only half the number of men, took the field against his opponent. They met near Mount Zemarim, on the borders of Ephraim. The armies were drawn out in battle array, when Abijah, who was posted on an elevated spot, finding the opportunity favourable, beckoned with his hand, and began to harangue Jeroboam and the hostile army. His speech was good, and to the purpose; but it does not seem to us entitled to the unqualified praise which it has generally received. He began with affirming the divine right of the house of David to reign over all Israel, by virtue of the immutable covenant by which Jehovah had promised to David that his posterity should reign for ever. Consequently he treated the secession of the ten tribes as an unprincipled act of rebellion against the royal dynasty of David, and against God—an act whereby the crafty Jeroboam, with a number of vain and lawless associates, had availed themselves of the weakness and inexperience of Rehoboam to deprive the chosen house of its just rights. This statement doubtless embodies the view which the house of David, and the party attached to its interests, took of the recent event. They regarded as a rebellion what

* This lady is mentioned in three places, and in all of them the name of her father is differently given. In 1 Kings xv. 2, it is "Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom;" in 2 Chron. xi. 20, "Maachah, the daughter of Absalom;" and in 2 Chron. xiii., "Michaiah, the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah." The Jews believe that Absalom the son of David is intended. This does not appear quite certain; but if so, we may take their explanation that Maachah was the daughter of Tamar, the daughter of Absalom; in which case, the comparison of texts will intimate that Uriel married Tamar, and Maachah was their danghter, which consequently makes her the grand-daughter of Absalom and daughter of Uriel. This, upon the whole, seems more probable than that the several names, Abishalom, Absalom, and Uriel, all point to the same person as the father of Maachah.

was truly a revolution; and which, although, like other revolutions, it had its secret springs (as in the jealousy between the tribes of Ephraim and Judah), was not only justifiable in its abstract principles, but on the peculiar theory of the Hebrew constitution: for it had the previous sanction and appointment of Jehovah, as declared to both parties; and, in its immediate cause, sprung from a most insulting refusal of the representative of the dynasty to concede that redress of grievances which ten-twelfths of the whole nation demanded, and which it had a right to demand and obtain before it recognised him as king. However, a king of Judah could not well be expected to take any other than a dynastic and party view of this great question: and that such, necessarily, was the view of Abijah is what we have desired to explain, as the generally good spirit of his harangue has disposed hasty thinkers to take the impression which he intended to convey.

With more justice, Abijah proceeded to animadvert on the measures—the corruptions and arbitrary changes—by which Jeroboam had endeavoured to secure his kingdom; and, with becoming pride, contrasted this with the beautiful order in which, according to the law of Moses, and the institutions of David and Solomon, the worship of Jehovah was conducted by the Levitical priesthood in that "holy and beautiful house" which the Great King honoured with the visible symbol of his inhabitance. He concluded: "*We* keep the charge of Jehovah our God; but *ye* have forsaken him. And, behold, God himself is with us for our captain, and his priests with sounding trumpets to cry alarm against you. O children of Israel, fight not against Jehovah the God of your fathers; for ye shall not prosper."*

By Jeroboam this harangue was only viewed as an opportunity for executing a really clever military operation. He secretly ordered a body of men to file round the hill, and attack the Judahites in the rear, while he assailed them in front. This manœuvre was so well executed, that Abijah, by the time he had finished his speech, perceived that he was surrounded by the enemy. The army of Judah raised a cry of astonishment and alarm, and a universal panic would in all likelihood have ensued. But the priests at that instant sounded their silver trumpets, at which well-known and inspiriting signal the more stout-hearted raised a cry for help to Jehovah, and rushed upon the enemy; and their spirited example raised the courage and faith of the more timid and wavering. The host of Israel could not withstand the force which this Divine impulse gave to the arm of Judah. Their dense mass was broken and fled, and of the whole number it is said not fewer than 500,000 were slain,—a slaughter, as Josephus † remarks, such as never occurred in any other war, whether it were of the Greeks or the barbarians.‡ This would still be true if the number had been much smaller. "In numbers so large," Jahn § remarks, "there may be some error of the transcribers; but it is certain that after this defeat the kingdom of Israel was considerably weakened, while that of Judah made constant progress in power and importance. We must here mention, once for all, that, owing to the mistakes of transcribers in copying numerals, we cannot answer for the correctness of the great numbers of men which are mentioned here and in the sequel. *When there are no means of rectifying these numbers, we set them down as they occur in the books.*" Such also is our own practice.

This great victory was pursued by Abijah, in the re-taking and annexation to his dominion of some border towns and districts, some of which had originally belonged to Judah and Benjamin, but which the Israelites had found means to include in their portion of the divided kingdom. Among these towns was Bethel; and this being the seat of one of the golden calves, the loss of it must have been a matter of peculiar mortification to Jeroboam, and of triumph to Abijah.

The reign of Abijah was not by any means answerable to the expectations which his speech

* 2 Chron. xiii. 11, 12.

† Antiq. viii. 2, 3.

‡ With reference to the high numbers which occur here, Dr. Hales observes: "The numbers in this wonderful battle are probably corrupt, and should be reduced to 40,000, 80,000, and 50,000 (slain), as in the Latin Vulgate of Sixtus Quintus, and many earlier editions, and in the old Latin translation of Josephus; and that such were the readings in the Greek text of that author originally, Vignoles judiciously collects from Abarbanel's charge against Josephus of having made Jeroboam's loss no more than 50,000 men, *contrary to the Hebrew text.*" See Kennicott's 'Dissertations,' vol. i. p. 533, and vol. ii. p. 201, &c., 564. To this we may add the remark of Jahn, in which we more entirely concur.

§ Book v. sect. 36.

and his victory are calculated to excite. We are told that "he walked in all the sins of his father," and that "his heart was not perfect with Jehovah his God;" by which it would appear that he did not take sufficient heed to avoid and remove the idolatries and abominations which Solomon and Rehoboam had introduced or tolerated. He died in 970 B.C., after a reign of three years, leaving behind him twenty-two sons and sixteen daughters, whom he had by fourteen wives.

The son who succeeded him was named Asa. He was still very young, and the affairs of the kingdom appear for some time to have been administered by his grandmother, Maachah, whose name has already been mentioned. Asa, for his virtues, his fidelity to the principles of the theocracy, and the prosperity and victory with which he was in consequence favoured, takes place in the first rank of the kings of Judah. He enjoys the high character that "his heart was perfect with Jehovah all his days: and he did that which was right with Jehovah, as did his father David." His first cares were directed towards the utter uprooting of the idolatries and abominations which had been suffered to creep in during the preceding reigns. He drove from his states the corrupters of youth, and with an unsparing hand he purged Jerusalem of the infamies which had long harboured there. The idols were overthrown and broken in pieces, and the groves which had sheltered the dark abominations of idolatry were cut down: even his grandmother, Maachah, he deprived of the authority—removing her from being queen—which she had abused to the encouragement of idolatry; and the idols which she had set up he utterly destroyed. By thus clearing them from defiling admixtures, the pure and grand doctrines and practices of the Mosaical system shone forth with a lustre that seemed new in that corrupt age. Again the priests of Jehovah were held in honour by the people; and again the temple, its past losses being in part repaired by the royal munificence, was provided with all that suited the dignity of the splendid ritual service there rendered to God; for Asa was enabled to replace with silver and gold a portion of the precious things which Shishak had taken from the temple, and which Rehoboam had supplied with brass.

Ten years of prosperity and peace rewarded the pious zeal of the king of Judah. In these years much was done by him to strengthen and improve his kingdom, especially in repairing and strengthening the fortified towns, and in surrounding with strong walls and towers many which had not previously been fortified. We are also informed that "Asa had an army of 300,000 out of Judah, who bore shields and spears; and of 280,000 out of Benjamin, who bore shields and spears: all these were men of valour." This and other passages of the same nature, describing the immense military force of the small kingdoms of Judah and Israel (even setting aside those which labour under the suspicion of having been altered by the copyists), appear to intimate that the general enrolment for military service which David contemplated, but was prevented from completely executing, was accomplished by later kings. It is always important to remember, however, that the modern European sense of the word *army*, as applied to a body of men exclusively devoted to a military profession, is unknown to the history of this period; and in the statement before us we are to see no more than that the men thus numbered were provided with weapons (or that the king had weapons to arm them), and were, the whole or any part of them, bound to obey any call from the king into actual service.

An occasion for such a call occurred to Asa after ten years of prosperity and peace. His dominions were then exposed to a most formidable invasion from "Zerah the Cushite," with a million of men and three hundred chariots.* It is beyond the range of probability, from the state of Egypt at this time, in the reign of Osorkon I.,† who succeeded Sheshonk (or

* Josephus gives 900,000 infantry and 100,000 cavalry, which some would reduce by striking off a cipher from each number. A merely conjectural emendation is, however, so difficult and hazardous, that it is better to retain the original numbers, even when doubtful. In the present instance we may refer to what has just been said as to the distinction between the armies of that time and our own. And if Asa in his contracted territory was able to call out above 500,000 men, there is no solid reason why it should be impossible to the Cushite nomades, among whom every man was able to use arms, to bring double that number together. There must always be a vast difference in numbers between the army that must be kept and paid permanently, and that which may be raised by a general call upon the adult male population to a warlike enterprise, and only for the time of that enterprise. The army of Tamerlane (as we call him) is said to have amounted to 1,600,000 men, and that of his antagonist Bajazet to 1,400,000. *Laonic. Chalcocond. de rebus Turc.* l. iii. p. 98, 102.

† His name is so given in the monuments, but in ancient writers it is *Osorthon*.

Shishak), that an army under Zerah should have marched through Egypt from the Ethiopia south of the cataracts of the Nile. It must therefore be concluded that the army was composed of the Cushites (or Ethiopians) of Arabia, the original seat of all the Cushites; and as the army was partly composed of Lybians, who, if this supposition be correct, could not well have passed from Africa through the breadth of Egypt on this occasion, it may, with very sufficient probability, be conjectured that they formed a portion of the Libyan auxiliaries in the army with which Shishak invaded Palestine, twenty-five years before, and who, instead of returning to their own deserts, deemed it quite as well to remain in those of Arabia Petræa, and in the country between Egypt and Palestine. And this explanation seems to be confirmed by the fact, which appears in the sequel, that they held some border towns (such as Gerar) in this district. The flocks and herds, and the tents of the invading host, sufficiently intimate the nomade character of the invasion.

This emergency was met by Asa in the true spirit of the theocracy. Fully conscious of the physical inadequacy of his force to meet the enemy, he nevertheless went forth boldly to give them battle, trusting in Jehovah, who had so often given his people the victory against far greater odds, and to whom he made the public and becoming appeal :—" O Jehovah, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many or with them that have no power: Help us, O Jehovah, our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O Jehovah, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee." The consequence of this proper manifestation of reliance upon their Omnipotent King was a very splendid victory over the Cushites. They were defeated in the great battle of Mareshah,* in the valley of Zephathah, and fled before the army of Judah, which commenced a vigorous pursuit, attended with great slaughter. The Ethiopians and Lybians fled towards their tents and to Gerar and other towns, which some of them (we have supposed the Lybians) occupied on the border land towards Philistia. Here the conquerors found a rich spoil of cattle from the camps of the nomades, and of goods from the towns. On their triumphal return, they were met by the prophet Obed, who excited the piety and gratitude of the king and his army by reminding them to whom the victory was really due, even to Jehovah; and he called to their remembrance the privilege they enjoyed, as contrasted with the kingdom of Israel, in the marked and beneficent protection and care of their Great King, and hinted at the duties which resulted from the enjoyment of such privileges. This was attended with very good effects; and in the warmth of his gratitude for the deliverance with which he had been favoured, Asa prosecuted his reforms with new vigour. He rooted out every remnant of idolatry, and engaged the whole people to renew their covenant with Jehovah.

It appears that the effect of the manifest tokens of the Divine favour which Asa received, especially in the great victory over Zerah, was felt in the neighbouring kingdom, and induced large numbers of the subjects of Baasha to migrate into his dominions. A constant and large accession of men, induced by such considerations, and by revived attachment to the theocracy, was calculated to give, and did give, a vast superiority of moral character to the kingdom of Judah. It was probably, as intimated in the last chapter, this tendency of his most valuable subjects to migrate into Judah, which induced Baasha to take the town of Ramah, and fortify it for a frontier barrier. The measure which Asa took on this occasion, of hiring the king of Syria to forego his previous alliance with Baasha, and cause a diversion in his own favour by invading the kingdom of Israel, was effectual as to the recovery of Ramah; for the death of Baasha, the following year, prevented him from resuming his designs. Asa availed himself of the materials which Baasha had brought together for the fortification of Ramah, to fortify the towns of Geba and Mizpeh. This advantage was, however, dearly purchased by the treasure of the temple and the palace which he was obliged to squander, to secure the assistance of the Syrians; and still more, by the displeasure of God, who denounced this proceeding as not only wrong in itself, but as indicating a want of that confidence in Him through which he had been enabled to overthrow the vast host which the Cushites brought against him. This intimation of the Divine displeasure was conveyed to the king by the pro-

* This was a town fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 8). It was the birthplace of the prophet Micah.

phet Hanani, and was received by Asa with such resentment that he put the messenger in prison. Indeed, he appears to have grown increasingly irritable in the later years of his reign, in consequence of which he was led to commit many acts of severity and injustice. But for this some allowance may be made in consideration of his sufferings from a disease in his feet, which appears to have been the gout. With reference to this disease, Asa incurs some blame in the Scriptural narrative for his resort to " the physicians instead of relying upon God;" the cause of which rather extraordinary censure is probably to be found in the fact that those physicians who were not priests or Levites (in whose hands the medical science of the Hebrews chiefly rested) were foreigners and idolaters, who trusted more to superstitious rites and incantations than to the simple remedies which nature offered.(1) With all these defects, for which much allowance may be made, Asa bears a good character in the Scriptural narrative, on account of the general rectitude of his conduct, and of his zealous services in upholding the great principles of the theocracy.



[Jewish Physician.—Modern Oriental.]

Asa died in the year 929 B.C., in the second year of Ahab, king of Israel, and after a long and, upon the whole, prosperous reign of forty-one years. He was sincerely lamented by all his subjects, who, according to their mode of testifying their final approbation, honoured his remains with a magnificent funeral. His body, laid on a bed of state, was burned with vast quantities of aromatic substances; and the ashes, collected with care, were afterwards deposited in the sepulchre which he had prepared for himself on Mount Zion. The burning of the dead, as a rite of sepulture, had originally been regarded with dislike by the Hebrews. But a change of feeling in this matter had by this time taken place; for the practice is not now mentioned as a new thing, and had probably been some time previously introduced Afterwards burning was considered the most distinguished honour which could be rendered to the dead, and the omission of it, in the case of royal personages, a disgrace.* But in later days the Jews conceived a dislike to this rite; and their doctors endeavoured, in consequence, to pervert the passages of Scripture which refer to it, so as to induce a belief that the aromatic substances alone, and not the body, were burnt.

CONTEMPORARY KINGS.

Kings of Judah.		Kings of Israel.	
Rehoboam	B.C. 990	Jeroboam	B.C. 990
Abijah	973	——	——
Asa	970	——	——
——	——	Baasha	966
——	——	Elah	943
——	——	Zimri and Omri	942
——	——	Ahab	931
Died	929	Died	909

* See 2 Chron. xvi. 14, xxi. 19; Jer. xxxiv. 5; Amos, vi. 10.

NOTE ON MEDICINE.



[Egyptian Physicians.]

([1]) MEDICINE, p. 560.—The following observations, derived chiefly from the works of Lightfoot, Professor Jahn, and Sir J. G. Wilkinson, with some additional matter from the authorities cited at the end, comprise all the information we possess concerning the state of medical science among the Hebrews and their neighbours.

At Babylon, those attacked with a disease were left in the streets, for the purpose of learning from such as might pass them, what practices or what medicines they had found of utility when afflicted in a similar manner. This was perhaps done also in other countries: the Egyptians carried their sick into the temples of Ser*apis*;* the Greeks carried theirs into those of Esculapius. In both these temples the means by which various cures had been effected were preserved in writing. With the aid of these recorded remedies, the art of healing assumed in the course of time the aspect of a science. It assumed such form first in Egypt, and at a much more recent period in Greece; but the physicians of the former were soon surpassed in skill by those of the latter country. That the Egyptians, however, had no little knowledge of medicine may be gathered from what is said in the Pentateuch respecting the marks of leprosy, in which the symptoms of the various kinds and states of the disease are discriminated with great precision. This and other medical information which the Israelites brought from Egypt unquestionably formed the basis of their medical science and practice. And as there was afterwards much communication between Egypt and Palestine, the latter country doubtless participated in the improvements made in the former, although we are not disposed to contend that the medical science among the Hebrews ever attained the state which it reached among the Egyptians. It is therefore possible to derive very valuable illustrative information from considering, as far as our means allow, the nature of the medical practice of that people. In this we have only to condense the information brought together by Sir J. G. Wilkinson.

The Egyptians certainly paid great attention to health; and "so wisely," says Herodotus (ii. 8), "was medicine managed by them, that no doctor was permitted to practise any but his own particular branch. Some were oculists, who only studied diseases of the eye; others attended solely to complaints of the head; others to those of the teeth; some again confined themselves to complaints of the intestines; and others to secret and internal maladies; accoucheurs being generally, if not always, women."*

They received salaries from the public treasury; and after they had studied those precepts which were laid down from the experience of their predecessors, they were permitted to practise; and in order to insure their attention to the prescribed rules, and to prevent dangerous experiments being made upon patients, they were punished if their treatment was contrary to the established system; and the death of a person under such circumstances was adjudged to them as a capital offence. If, however, every remedy had been administered according to the sanatory law, they were absolved from blame;† and "these provisions were made," says Diodorus, "with the persuasion that few persons could be capable of introducing any new treatment superior to

* From the termination *apis*, in the name of the Egyptian god of medicine, and seeing that Apis was unquestionably the golden calf worshipped by the Israelites in the wilderness, and also one of the two calves that Jeroboam set up in Dan and Bethel,—it has more than once occurred to us to suspect that Asa's blameable resort to the physicians involved some superstitious tampering with the golden calves of the neighbouring kingdom.

* This is still the case in Egypt, and throughout the East. See Exod. i. 15.

† Diod. i. 82.

what had been sanctioned and approved by the experience of the old practitioners. It is, however, obvious how, under the operation of this principle of inertion, the Egyptians ultimately fell below the Greeks and others in medical reputation.

Although paid by the government as a body, it was not illegal to receive fees for their advice and attendance ; and demands could be made in every instance, except on a foreign journey and on military service, when patients were visited free of expense.*

The principal mode adopted by the Egyptians for preventing illness was attention to regimen and diet. Being persuaded that the majority of diseases proceed from indigestion and excess of eating, they had frequent recourse to abstinence, emetics, slight doses of medicine, and other simple means of relieving the system, which some persons were in the habit of repeating every two or three days.† And Herodotus‡ mentions that in what he calls "the corn country" of Egypt, the inhabitants submitted to a regular course of medicine during three successive days every month.

The employment of numerous drugs in Egypt has been mentioned by sacred and profane writers; and the medicinal properties of many herbs which grow in the deserts, particularly between the Nile and the Red Sea, are still known to the Arabs; although their application has been but imperfectly recorded and preserved. "O virgin daughter of Egypt," says Jeremiah,§ "in vain shalt thou use many medicines, for thou shalt not be cured!" Homer, in the Odyssey,‖ describes the many valuable medicines given by Polydamna, the wife of Thonis, to Helen while in Egypt, "a country whose fertile soil produces an infinity of drugs, some salutary and some pernicious; where each physician possesses knowledge above all other men;" and Pliny makes frequent mention of the productions of that country and their use in medicine. The same writer¶ mentions that the Egyptians examined the bodies after death, to ascertain the nature of the diseases of which they died. And although his mention of the subject will not suffice to warrant the antiquity of the practice, there is much reason to conclude that the uses of dissection and the discoveries it promised, would be suggested early to a people who opened and treated the bodies of the dead with a view to the purposes of embalmment. In such operations appearances must frequently have been noticed, which could not but indicate the cause to which the death of the party might be traced.

* Diod. i. 82. † Diod., as before.
‡ Herod. ii. 77. § Jeremiah, lxvi. 11.
‖ Homer, Od. iv. 229. ¶ Pliny, xix. 5.

It is evident that the medical skill of the Egyptians was well known even in foreign and distant countries; and we learn from Herodotus* that Cyrus and Darius both sent to Egypt for medical men. But although their physicians are so often mentioned by Herodotus and other medical writers, the only indications of medical attendance occurs in the paintings of Beni-Hassan, where a doctor and a patient are twice represented, as in the cut at the head of this note.

It illustrates the spirit of the times, however, and corroborates the observations in the text to which this note is appended, that, even under this considerably advanced state of medical practice, there was much superstition mingled with it or joined to it. The dreams of the devout were thought to be often rewarded by the gods with an indication of the remedies their sufferings required;† but this and magic‡ were only a last resource, when the skill of the physician had been baffled, and all hopes of their recovery had been lost; and a similar superstitious feeling induced them to offer ex votos in their temples for the same purpose.§

According to Pliny,‖ the Egyptians claimed the honour of having invented the art of curing diseases. By which we are, of course, to understand that they claimed to have digested into an art the rules of healing which experience had accumulated. And to this claim the Bible affords some sanction by the fact that its first notice of physicians is to intimate their existence in Egypt,¶ as early as the time of Joseph; and the other early allusions to physicians are made by those who knew Egypt well.**

We think it clearly impossible, under all the circumstances of their position, but that the Israelites must have derived much benefit from the progress in medical science made by the Egyptians; but it must be admitted that the few intimations which the Scriptures offer do not enable us to estimate very precisely the extent of that benefit. Some acquaintance with surgical operations is implied in the rite of circumcision.†† There is ample evidence that the Hebrews had some acquaintance with the internal structure of the human system, although it does not appear that dissections

* Herod. iii. 1, 132. † Diod. i. 25.
‡ Wisdom of Solomon, xvii. 8.
§ Of which offerings there are the Scriptural instances of the golden emerods and mice deposited in the ark by the Philistines. See p. 416.
‖ Nat. Hist. vii. 56. ¶ Gen. l. 2.
** Exod. xxi. 19; Job xiii. 4. †† Gen. xvii. 11—14.

were ever made *by them.* That physicians sometimes undertook to exercise their skill in the removal of diseases of an internal nature, is evinced by the circumstance of David's playing upon the harp, to relieve the malady of Saul. The art of healing was entrusted by the Hebrews, as it was by the Egyptians, to the priests; and, by a law of the state, the Hebrew priests were obliged to take cognisance of leprosies.* Reference is made to physicians who were not priests, and to instances of sickness, disease, healing, etc., in the passages cited below.†

The balsam or balm, was particularly celebrated as a medicine.‡ That mineral baths were deemed worthy of notice may be inferred from Gen. xxxvi. 22;§ and their appreciation in later times is evinced by various intimations in Josephus, as well as by the ruined constructions at the baths of Tiberias, of the Hieromax, and of the Arnon. About the time of Christ the Jewish physicians advanced in science and increased in numbers.|| Many superstitious practices still however prevailed, arising probably from the fact (of which there are various examples in the Gospels) that it was usual to attribute to evil spirits the more grievous diseases, especially those in which either the body was distorted or the mind disturbed and tossed with frenzy.* In many cases, like the old Egyptian physicians, they began and persevered in treating a disease as such, but ended in pronouncing it an evil spirit, and then proceeded to deal with it by peculiar rites and exorcisms. Hence their medical precepts, after enumerating the medical alternatives of treatment, conclude with pointing out the superstitious rites and operations which are proper, in the given case, to be resorted to in the last instance.† It appears from the Talmud,‡ that the Hebrew physicians were accustomed to salute the sick by saying, "Arise from thy disease!" This salutation, in a form somewhat more imperative and commanding, had full effect in the mouth of Jesus.§ According to the Jerusalem Talmud, a man was considered to be in a state of convalescence when he began to take his usual food.

The modern medical science, or rather practice of the East is not very different from that which has here been described, and certainly is not in a more advanced state. From the length to which this note has extended, we must abstain from this part of the subject, and confine ourselves to the remark that it is very usual among the Moslems in case of illness to neglect medical aid altogether, placing their whole reliance upon Providence, or upon charms.¶

* Lev. xiii. 1, *et seq.*; Deut. xiv. 8, 9.

† 1 Sam. xvi. 16; 1 Kings i. 2—4; 2 Kings viii. 29, ix. 15; Isa. i. 6; Jer. viii. 22; Ezek. xxx. 21; Prov. iii 8, xi. 30, xii. 18, xvi. 15, xxix. 1.

‡ Jer. viii. 22, xlvi. 11, li. 8.

§ See Gesenius on the word ימים.

|| Mark v. 26; Luke iv. 23, v. 31, viii. 43; Joseph. Antiq. xvii. b. 5.

* See Examples in Lightfoot, Heb. and Talm. Exercit. on Matt. xvi. 15, and Luke xiii. 11.

† Lightfoot on Mark v. 26.

‡ Shabbath, p. 110.

§ Mark v. 41.

|| Compare Mark v. 43.

¶ See Lane's 'Modern Egyptians,' i. 277. Those who wish for more information on the subject may consult the 'Description de l'Egypte,' Chardin's 'Voyages,' Russell's 'Natural History of Aleppo,' and the respective 'Travels' of Browne and of Dr. Madden.

CHAPTER VI.

ISRAEL, FROM 931 B.C., TO 895 B.C.



[Damascus. From Laborde's 'Syria.']

AHAB, the son of Omri, mounted the throne of Israel in the year 931 B.C., being the thirty-eighth year of Asa, king of Judah. This king was, throughout his reign of twenty-two years, entirely under the influence of his idolatrous and unprincipled wife, Jezebel, a daughter of Ethbaal, or Ithobalus, king of Tyre.(1) Hitherto the irregularities connected with the service before the golden calves, as symbols of Jehovah, had formed the chief offence of Israel. But now Ahab and Jezebel united their authority to introduce the gods of other nations. The king built a temple in Samaria, erected an image, and consecrated a grove to Baal, the god of the Sidonians. Jezebel, earnest in promoting the worship of her own god, maintained a multitude of priests and prophets of Baal. In a few years idolatry became the predominant religion of the land; and Jehovah, and the golden calves as representations of him, were viewed with no more reverence than Baal and his image. It now appeared as if the knowledge of the true God was for ever lost to the Israelites; but Elijah the prophet boldly stood up,

and opposed himself to the authority of the king, and succeeded in retaining many of his countrymen in the worship of Jehovah. The greater the power was which supported idolatry, so much the more striking were the prophecies and miracles which directed the attention of the Israelites to Jehovah, and brought disgrace upon the idols, and confusion on their worshippers. The history of this great and memorable struggle gives to the narrative of Ahab's reign an unusual prominence and extent in the Hebrew annals; and although a writer studious of brevity might at the first view be disposed to omit, as episodical, much of the history of Elijah the Tishbite,* a little reflection will render it manifest that the prominence given to the history of this illustrious champion for the truth, was a designed and necessary result from the fact that the history of the Hebrew nation is the history of a church; and that although the history of this great controversy might be omitted or overlooked by those who erroneously regard the history of the Hebrews merely as a *political* history, in the other point of view it becomes of the most vital importance.

The first appearance of Elijah is with great abruptness to announce a drought, and consequent famine, for the punishment of the idolatry into which the nation had fallen; and that this calamity should only be removed at his own intercession. He apprehended that the iniquities of the land would bring down upon it destructions from God; and he therefore prayed for this lesser visitation, which might possibly bring the king and people to repentance.

After such a denunciation, it was necessary that the prophet should withdraw himself from the presence and solicitations of the king, when the drought should commence, which it did, probably, about the sixth year of Ahab. Accordingly, obeying the directions of the divine oracle, he withdrew to his native district beyond Jordan, and hid himself in a cave by the brook Cherith; where the providence of God secured his support by putting it into the hearts of the Arabs encamped in the neighbourhood (2) to send him bread and meat every morning and evening; and the brook furnished him with drink, until "the end of the year," or beginning of spring, when it was dried up from the continued drought.

It was probably under the irritation produced by the first pressure of the calamity that Jezebel induced the king to issue orders for the destruction of all the prophets of Jehovah.† Many of them perished: but a good and devout man, even in the palace of Ahab,—Obadiah, the steward of his household,—managed to save a hundred of the number by sheltering them in caverns, where he provided for their maintenance until, probably, an opportunity was found for their escape into the kingdom of Judah.



[Refuge in Caverns.]

When the brook of Cherith was dried up, the prophet was then directed by the Divine Voice to proceed westward to Sarepta,‡ a town of Sidon, under the dominion of Jezebel's father; where he lodged with a poor widow, and was miraculously supported with her and her family for a considerable time, according to his own prediction—"that her single barrel of meal should not waste, nor her single cruse of oil fail, until that day when Jehovah should send rain upon

* He is introduced as "Elijah the Tishbite, of the inhabitants of Gilead." It is probable therefore that the designation of "Tishbite" is from some town in Gilead, which cannot now be clearly ascertained.

† There were probably "students in the schools of the prophets," which we have already noticed (see p. 423), or persons who devoted themselves to the study of the divine law, and on whom the spirit of prophecy occasionally came.

‡ Now called *Sarphan*, about three hours' journey from Sidon on the way to Tyre.

the earth." While he remained at this place, the prophet, by his prayers to God, restored to life the son of the widow with whom he lodged. Here he stayed until the end of three years from the commencement of the drought, when he was commanded to go and show himself to Ahab. That king had meanwhile caused the most diligent search to be made for him in every quarter, doubtless with the view of inducing him to offer up those intercessions through which alone the present grievous calamity could terminate. But at this time, having probably relinquished this search as hopeless, the attention of the king was directed to the discovery of any remaining supplies of water which might still exist in the land. He had, therefore, for the purposes of this exploration, divided the country between himself and Obadiah; and both proceeded personally to visit all the brooks and fountains of the land. Obadiah was journeying on this mission, when Elijah, who was returning from Sarepta, met him, and commissioned him to announce his arrival to Ahab. The king, when he saw the prophet, reproached him as the cause of the national calamities,—"Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" But the prophet boldly retorted the charge upon himself and his father's house, because they had forsaken Jehovah and followed Baal. He then secured the attention of the king by intimating an intention of interceding for rain; and required him to call a general assembly of all the people at Mount Carmel, and also to bring all the prophets or priests of Baal,* and of the groves.

There, in the audience of that vast assembly, Elijah reproached the people with the destruction of the prophets of Jehovah, of whom, he alleged, that he alone remained, while the prophets of Baal alone were four hundred and fifty, fed at the table of Jezebel; and then he called them to account for their divided worship,—"How long halt ye between two opinions? If Jehovah be the God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him." The people intimated their uncertainty by their silence to this appeal; on which the prophet, fully conscious of his unlimited commission, proposed a solemn sacrifice to each, and "the God that answereth by fire (to consume his sacrifice) let him be the God." As this was a fair trial of Baal's supposed power in his own element, the most zealous of his worshippers could make no objection to it, and the proposal was approved by all the people. Accordingly, when Baal answered not the earnest and ultimately maddened invocations of his prophets,—but Jehovah instantly answered the prayer of Elijah, by sending fire (as on former occasions) to consume the victim on the altar, although it had previously been inundated with water by the direction of the prophet,—then the people, yielding to one mighty impulse of conviction, fell upon their faces, and cried, "Jehovah, he is the God! Jehovah, he is the God!"—thus also expressing that Baal was *not* the God, and rejecting him. To ratify this abjuration of Baal, Elijah commanded them to destroy his priests; and this, in the enthusiasm of their re-kindled zeal for Jehovah, they immediately did, at the brook Kishon, which had been the scene of Barak's victory over the Canaanites.

Immediately after this sublime national act of acknowledgment of Jehovah and rejection of Baal, the prophet went up to the top of Carmel, and prayed fervently for rain seven times; the promise of which (speedily followed by fulfilment) at last appeared in the form of "a little cloud like a man's hand," rising out of the Mediterranean sea—a phenomenon which, in warm maritime climates, is not the unusual harbinger of rain.

This remarkable transaction may be ascribed to the tenth year of Ahab's reign.

Elijah was now compelled to fly for his life, to avoid the threatened vengeance of Jezebel for the destruction of her prophets. He fled southward, and when he had travelled nearly 100 miles, from Samaria to Beersheba, he left his servant and went alone a day's journey into the wilderness. There as he sat, for rest and shelter, under the scanty shade which a broom tree offered, the mighty spirit by which he had hitherto been sustained, gave way, and he prayed for death to end his troubles. "It is enough:" he cried, "now, O Jehovah, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers!" To strengthen his now sinking faith, and to reward his sufferings in the cause of the God of Israel, whose honour he had so zealously vindicated, the prophet was encouraged by an angel to undertake a long journey to

* It may assist the comprehension of the narrative to know that Baal was an impersonation of the sun

"the mount of God," Horeb, where the Divine presence had been manifested to Moses, the founder of the law; and of which a further manifestation was now probably promised to this great champion and restorer of the same law. On this mysterious occasion the angel touched him twice, to rouse him from his sleep, and twice made him eat of food which he found prepared for him. In the strength which that food gave, the prophet journeyed (doubtless by a circuitous route) forty days, until he came, it is supposed, to the cave where Moses was stationed, when he saw the glory of Jehovah in "the cleft of the rock."



[Sauton under Tree.]

There he heard the voice of Jehovah calling to him, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" The prophet, evidently recognising that voice, said, "I have been very zealous for Jehovah, the God of Hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thy altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword, and I only am left; and they seek my life to take it away." Then the voice commanded him to go forth, for Jehovah was about to pass by. The first harbinger of the Divine presence was a great and strong wind, which rent the mountain and brake the rock in pieces;—but Jehovah was not in that wind. Then followed an earthquake;—but Jehovah was not in the earthquake. This was succeeded by a fire;—but Jehovah was not in the fire. After this, came "*a still, small Voice;*" and when the prophet heard it, he knew the Voice of God, and, reverently hiding his face in his mantle, he stood forth in the entrance of the cave. The Voice repeated the former question, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" to which the same answer as before was returned. The Voice, in reply, gently rebuked the prophet for his crimination of the whole people of Israel, and his discouraging representation of himself as the only prophet left. "I have yet left to me *seven thousand* men, in Israel, who have not bowed the knee to Baal." He was further instructed to return by a different route, by the way of Damascus; and, by the way to anoint or appoint Elisha to be his own successor, and (either by himself or Elisha), Hazael to be King of Damascene-Syria, and Jehu to be King of Israel—as the chosen ministers of Divine vengeance upon the house and people of Ahab.

Of the three, Elisha was the only one to whom Elijah himself made known this appointment. Elisha was the son of Shaphat, an opulent man of Abel-meholah, in the half tribe of Manasseh, west of the Jordan. The prophet found him ploughing with twelve yoke of oxen, when, by a significant action, still well understood in the East, that of throwing his own mantle upon him, he conveyed the intimation of his prophetic call. That call was understood and obeyed by Elisha; and after having, with the prophet's permission, taken leave of his parents, he hastened to follow Elijah, to whom he ever after remained attached.

It is singular that the first formal alliance between the kingdoms of Israel and Judah took place during the reigns of two princes of such opposite characters as Ahab in Israel, and Jehoshaphat in Judah. But it was so: and in forming it, and in cementing it by the marriage of his eldest son Jehoram to Athaliah the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, he doubtless acted from very ill considered policy, and laid in a great store of disasters for himself and his

house. It is unfortunate that we are unacquainted with the motives which led to this most unhappy connection. A close and intimate union between the two kingdoms could not but be, *in itself*, a political good; and the error of Jehoshaphat probably lay in considering this fact by itself, without taking due account of that evil character of Ahab and his house, and that alienation of his people from God, which were calculated to neutralise, and actually did far more than neutralise, the natural advantages of such alliance. The marriage took place in the fifteeenth year of Ahab's, and the thirteenth of Jehoshaphat's reign.

Not long after this, Ahab had cause to be alarmed at the designs of Ben-hadad, the King of Damascene-Syria, which kingdom had been gathering such strength, while that of the Hebrews had been weakened by divisions and by misconduct, that even the subjugation of Israel did not seem to Ben-hadad an enterprise to which his ambition might not aspire. To this end he made immense preparations: he claimed the united aid of all his tributary princes, thirty-two in number, and ultimately appeared with all his forces before Samaria, to which he laid siege. He first summoned Ahab to deliver up all his most precious things; and, compelled by dire necessity, the King of Israel consented. But Ben-hadad was only induced by this readiness of yielding, to enhance his terms, and sent further demands, which were so very hard and insulting, that the spirit of Ahab was at last roused, and, supported by the advice of his council, he determined to act on the defensive. Soon after a prophet came with the promise of victory over the vast host of the Syrians, by means of a mere handful of spirited young men who were particularly indicated.

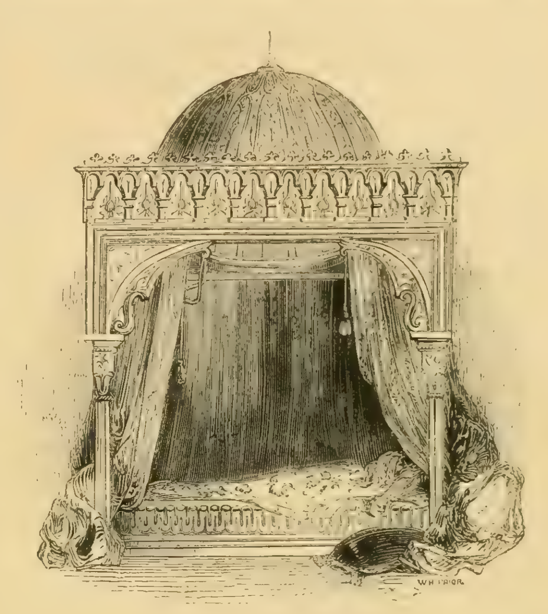
The confidence of the Syrians was so great that they led a careless and jovial life, thinking of little but of indulgence in wine and good cheer, of which the king himself set the example. In the midst of these feasts, a body of two hundred and thirty-two men was seen to leave the city, and advance towards the camp. Ben-hadad, when he heard of it, quietly ordered them to be taken alive, whether they came for peace or for war. But suddenly these men fell upon the advanced sentinels, and upon all who were near them; and the cries and confusion of so many persons, taken as it were by surprise, was instrumental in creating a general panic among the vast Syrian host. Drawn himself by the irresistible movement, Ben-hadad fled on horseback, with all his army; and the troops of Israel (7000 in number), which attended the motions and watched the effect of the sally of the brave two hundred and thirty-two, closely pursued the flying Syrians, and rendered the victory complete.

The prophet who foretold this victory now apprised Ahab that Ben-hadad would renew his attempt the ensuing year. This took place accordingly. The Syrians came in equal force as before, and, as they thought, with wiser counsels. The kingdom of Damascene-Syria was mostly a plain; whereas the kingdom of Israel, and the site of Samaria, in particular, was mountainous. Rightly attributing their defeat to the God (or, as they chose in their idolatrous ignorance, to say the *gods*) of Israel, they reasoned that he was a god of the hills, and therefore among the hills more powerful than their gods, who were gods of the valleys and the plains. Instead therefore of going among the hills as before, they would now fight in the plains, where they could not doubt of success. This reasoning, however absurd it now seems to us and did then seem (such were their privileges) to all enlightened Israelites, was in strict and philosophical accordance with the first principles of idolatry, and the general system of national and local deities. But such a view being taken by them, it became necessary to Jehovah to vindicate his own honour and assert his omnipotence by their overthrow. *For this reason* he delivered this vast host that covered the land into the hands of the comparatively small and feeble host of Israel. The Syrians were cut in pieces; 100,000 of their number were left dead upon the field of battle, and the rest were entirely dispersed. Ben-hadad, with a large number of the fugitives, sought refuge in Aphek; but by the sudden fall of the wall of that fortified town, 27,000 of his men were crushed to death, and the place was rendered defenceless. Nothing was now left to him but to yield himself up to Ahab. That monarch, weak and criminal by turns, received the Syrian king into his friendship, and formed an impious alliance with him, regardless not only of the law, but of the honour of God, who had given him the victory, and had delivered for punishment

into his hands this blasphemer and enemy of his Great Name. For this he was, in the name of Jehovah, severely rebuked and threatened by one of "the sons of the prophets," by the way-side; in consequence he withdrew to his palace "heavy and displeased."

The history of Ahab affords one more, and the last, interview between him and Elijah. This was about nine years after the grand solemnity at Mount Carmel, and the nineteenth of Ahab's reign.

At that time the king took a fancy to enlarge his own garden by taking into it an adjoining vineyard which formed part of the patrimonial estate of a person named Naboth. He made him the fair offer of its value in money, or to give him some other piece of land of equal value. But Naboth, considering it a religious duty to preserve "the inheritance of his fathers," declined on any terms to alienate it. The reason was good, and ought to have satisfied the king. But he received the refusal like a spoiled child; he lay down upon his bed, and turned away his face to the wall, and refused to take his food. When his wife heard of this she came to him, and having learned the cause of his grief, she said indignantly, "Dost thou not now govern the kingdom of Israel? Arise, eat food, and let thine heart be cheerful; the vineyard of Naboth, the Jezreelite, *I will give to thee*." Accordingly, she procured Naboth to be put to death under the form of law. At a public feast he was accused by suborned witnesses of blasphemy, for which he was stoned to death, and his estates confiscated to the king. Jezebel then went to Ahab, apprised him of what had happened, and told him to go down and take possession of the vineyard. It is clear that if he did not suggest, he approved of the crime, and proceeded with joy to reap the fruits of it. But in the vineyard of Naboth, the unexpected and unwelcome sight of Elijah the prophet met his view. Struck by his own conscience, he cried, "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" To which Elijah replied, "I have found thee, because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the eyes of Jehovah." He then proceeded to denounce the doom of utter extermination upon himself and his house for his manifold iniquities; and then, with reference to the immediate offence, he said, "Hast thou slain and also taken possession? Thus saith Jehovah, In whatsoever place the dogs licked up the blood of Naboth, shall dogs lick up thy blood, even thine. And concerning Jezebel, Jehovah hath also spoken, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel under the wall of Jezreel. Him who dieth of Ahab in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth in the fields shall the fowls of the air eat." We are immediately reminded, however, that this terrible doom, although now denounced, as following this crowning deed of guilt, was really a consequence of this *and all the other* iniquities of Ahab's reign; for it is added, "Now there had been none like to Ahab, who, stirred up by Jezebel his wife, sold himself to work wickedness in the eyes of Jehovah. And he committed great abominations by going after vile idols, according to all that the Amorites did, whom Jehovah cast out before the Israelites."


Royal Bed. Modern Oriental.

When Ahab heard the heavy doom pronounced against him by the prophet, "he rent his clothes (in token of extreme grief), and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went mournfully." This conduct found some acceptance with God, who said to Elijah, Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? Because he humbleth himself

before me, I will not bring the evil in his days, but in his son's days will I bring this evil upon his house." From the judicial sentence specially applicable to the case of Naboth, there was, however, no dispensation; as it behoved the Divine king to demonstrate that he still possessed and exercised the authority of supreme civil governor, and that the kings were responsible to him and punishable by him. This was signally shown in the sequel.

Israel was now at peace with Syria, but it had not recovered possession of all the places which had at different times been lost to that power. Of these, Ramoth Gilead, beyond Jordan, was one which, from its proximity and importance, Ahab was particularly anxious to regain possession. He therefore resolved to expel the Syrian garrison from that place; and as he was aware that the attempt would be opposed by the whole power of the Syrian kingdom, he claimed the assistance of Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, which that prince, with the facility of disposition which formed the chief defect of his excellent character, very readily granted. Nevertheless, when the preparations were completed, Jehoshaphat, unsatisfied by the assurances of success which Ahab's own "prophets" had given, desired that some other prophet of Jehovah should be consulted. This request was more distasteful to Ahab than he liked to avow. "There is yet one man," he said, "Micaiah,* the son of Imlah, but him I hate, because he prophesieth not good concerning me, but evil." He was, however, sent for; and although the messenger had strongly inculcated upon him the necessity of making his counsel conformable to the wishes of the king and the predictions of his own prophets, the undaunted Micaiah boldly foretold the fatal result of the expedition. At this the king was so much enraged, that he ordered him to be kept in confinement, and fed with the bread and water of affliction until he returned in peace. "If thou return at all in peace," rejoined the faithful prophet, "then Jehovah hath not spoken by me."

Ben-hadad, the king of Syria, repaid the misplaced kindness of Ahab by the most bitter enmity against his person; and he gave strict orders to his troops that their principal object should be his destruction. Ahab seems to have had some private information of this; for he went, himself, disguised to the battle, and treacherously persuaded Jehoshaphat to appear in all the ensigns of his high rank.† In consequence of this the king of Judah was nearly slain, being surrounded by the Syrians, who pressed towards the point in which one royally arrayed appeared. But they discovered their mistake in time, and turned their attention in another direction. Ahab, with all his contrivance, could not avoid his doom. A Syrian archer ‡ sent forth from his bow an arrow at random. Guided by the unseen Power which had numbered the days of Ahab, that arrow found the disguised king, penetrated between the joints of his strong armour, and gave him his death-wound. He directed his charioteer to drive him out of the battle; but perceiving that a general action was coming on, he remained, and was held up in his chariot until the evening, animating his friends by his voice and presence. After the fall of night had terminated the combat, the king died, and the army was directed to disperse. The body of Ahab was taken to Samaria, to be deposited in the family sepulchre; and to mark the literal fulfilment of Elijah's prophecy, the historian acquaints us that his chariot was washed, and his armour rinsed in the pool of Samaria, where the dogs licked up the blood that he had lost. Thus signally, in the mysterious dispensations of Divine providence, were reconciled the seemingly discordant declarations of two prophets, one of whom had foretold his death at Ramoth Gilead, and the other that dogs should claim his blood in Samaria.

The history of Ahab is almost exclusively occupied with the record of his guilt, and we are referred for information concerning his other public acts to a chronicle which no longer exists. But it transpires that he built several cities in Israel, and also a palace, which, from the quantities of ivory with which it was ornamented, was distinguished as "the ivory palace."

Ahab's death took place in the year 909 B.C., after a reign of twenty-two years.

He was succeeded in his throne and in his sin by his son AHAZIAH. The chief event of

* Josephus and other ancient Jews understood that this Micaiah was the same prophet who had rebuked Ahab for his alliance with Ben hadad.

† Josephus, supported by the Septuagint, says he wore the royal robes of Ahab.

‡ Josephus says this was Naaman, who will soon come again before us.

his short reign was the revolt of the Moabites, who, since their subjection by David, had continued to supply Israel with a rich tribute of flocks and fleeces.* Ahaziah himself having received serious injuries by a fall through a lattice in an upper chamber of his palace, sent messengers into the land of the Philistines, to consult Baal-zebub, the fly-god of Ekron, whether he should recover. But they were met on the way by the prophet Elijah, who sent them back to the king with a denunciation of death, for his impiety in forsaking the God of Israel and resorting to strange gods. The messengers knew not the prophet; but when they described him to the king as a man clad with a hairy garment, and with a leathern girdle about his loins, he recognised Elijah, and sent an officer with fifty men to apprehend him. But the prophet, whom they found sitting upon a hill, called down fire from heaven, which consumed this party, and also a second; but he went voluntarily with the third, the officer in command of which humbled himself before him, and besought him. The prophet confirmed to the king himself his former denunciation of speedy death; and, accordingly, Ahaziah died, after a short reign of two years, leaving no son to succeed him. This king maintained the alliance which his father had established with King Jehoshaphat, and even persuaded that monarch to admit him to share in his contemplated maritime expedition to the regions of Ophir, of which there will be occasion to speak in the next chapter.

Ahaziah was succeeded by his brother JEHORAM. This king, like his predecessors, "did evil in the sight of Jehovah," yet not to the same extent of enormity as they; for although the loose and irregular service of the golden calves was maintained by him, he overthrew the images of Baal, and discouraged the grosser idolatries which his father and brother had introduced.

The first and most urgent care of the new king was to reduce to obedience the Moabites, who, as just mentioned, had revolted on the death of Ahab. As the king of Judah had himself been troubled by the Moabites, he readily undertook to take a very prominent part in this enterprise, to which he also brought the support of his own tributary, the king of Edom. The plan of the campaign was, that the allied army should invade the land of Moab in its least defensible quarter, by going round by "the wilderness of Edom," southward of the Dead Sea; which also offered the advantage that the forces of the king of Israel could be successively joined by those of the kings of Judah and Edom on the march. This circuitous march occupied seven days; and towards the end of it the army and the horses suffered greatly from thirst, probably occasioned by the failure of the wells and brooks, from which an adequate supply of water had been expected. Much loss had already been incurred through this unexpected drought, and nothing less than utter ruin seemed to impend over the allies when they lay on the borders of Moab, within view of the enemy, which had advanced to meet them. In this emergency the very proper course occurred to Jehoshaphat of consulting a prophet of Jehovah. On inquiry it was discovered that Elisha, "who had poured water on the hands of Elijah"—a proverbial expression from the most conspicuous act of service in a personal attendant—was the only prophet to be found in that neighbourhood. Full of the faith of his illustrious master, this faithful disciple of Elijah had beheld the Jordan divide before that prophet, and had been with him when, upborne by the whirlwind, he was taken gloriously away from the earth in the chariot and horses which glowed like fire, and who had substituted himself in his mission to work marvels and reprove kings in the name of Jehovah. Already had the "spirit and power of Elias," which abode in him, been manifested to all Israel by the prodigies he had wrought. The waters of the Jordan had divided before him, the second time, when smote by the fallen mantle of Elijah;—the bad waters of Jericho had become permanently wholesome at his word;—and to evince the power of his curse, bears from the woods had destroyed forty-two young men belonging to idolatrous Bethel, who, joining unbelief to insult, had bade him, in terms of mockery and derision,—"Go up thou bald head! Go up thou bald head!"—ascend after his master.

The prophet, thus already distinguished, was sought in his retreat by the three kings. His greeting of Jehoram was severe, "What have *I* to do with *thee?* Get thee to the

* The annual tribute rendered by the Moabites had been 100,000 lambs and 100,000 wethers, with their wool.

prophets of thy father and to the prophets of thy mother." Nevertheless, but avowedly on the sole account of the good Jehoshaphat, he interested himself for the salvation of the army, which was in such imminent danger: and, having consulted the Lord, he promised that on the morrow there should be such an abundance of water, that the bed of the torrent, near which the army was encamped, should not be able to contain it; and, more than this, he also indicated that this should be but the prelude of a signal victory over and complete ruin of the enemy.

All things happened as he had said. In the morning, at the time of offering sacrifice, the waters descended in such full-flood from the heights of Edom, that the camp would have been submerged, had not the army, by the direction of the prophet, previously dug large ditches to receive the redundant waters. All this was unknown to the Moabites, who, when they arose in the morning and, on looking towards the camp of the allies, beheld the lurid rays of the rising sun reflected from the waters, which now covered the arid sands of yesterday, doubted not that it was blood which they saw, and formed the not by any means improbable conclusion that the armies of Israel and Judah had quarrelled with and destroyed each other. They therefore rushed without the least care or order to the pillage of the camp; but so far from finding it deserted, they were surrounded and cut in pieces by the armed and now invigorated allies. The remnant of the army was pursued into the interior of the country by the conquerors, whose course was blackened by the fire and crimsoned by the sword. Ultimately they invested the metropolitan city of Kir-haraseth,* in which the king, Mesha, had taken refuge. One part of the walls had already been destroyed, and the king seeing he could no longer defend the place, attempted to break through the besieging host at the head of seven hundred swordsmen. But failing in this desperate effort, he sought to propitiate his cruel gods by offering up the frightful sacrifice of his eldest son, the heir of his throne, in the breach.([3]) Seized with horror at this spectacle, the conquering kings abandoned the siege, withdrew from the country, and returned to their own states. In taking this step they did not consider, or, perhaps not care, that they gave to the horrible act of the Moabite the very effect which he desired, and enabled him to delude himself with the persuasion that his sacrifice had been successful, and well-pleasing to the powers of heaven.

In the remaining history of Jehoram's reign, the prophet Elisha occupies nearly as conspicuous a place as Elijah did in that of Ahab. The wonders wrought by his hands were numerous; but they were less signal, and less attended with public and important results—less designed to effect public objects, than those of his master. Indeed, his *national* acts were less considerable than those of Elijah; and although he possessed great influence, and was undoubtedly the foremost man of his age, he wanted those energies of character, and that consuming zeal which his predecessor manifested; or, perhaps more correctly, the exigencies of the times were not such as to call for the exercise of such endowments as had been possessed by Elijah. But although those of his successor were *different* in their kind, we know not that, with regard to *the differing time*, they were less useful or eminent. In this, and in a thousand other historical examples,—more especially in the history of the Hebrews,—we see men raised up for, and proportioned to, the times in which they live, and the occasions which call for them. The most eminent of the prophets, since Moses, was given to the most corrupt time; in which only a man of his indomitable, ardent, and almost fierce spirit, could have been equal to the fiery and almost single-handed struggle for God against principalities and powers. Elisha fell in milder times, and was correspondingly of a milder character, although he was not found unequal to any of the more trying circumstances which arose during the period of his prophetic administration. Indeed his conduct on such occasions was such as to suggest that it was only the milder spirit of the time on which he fell, precluding occasion for their exercise, that prevented the manifestation in him of that grander class of endowments which his predecessor displayed. As it was, Elisha, instead of being like his master, driven by persecution from the haunts of men to the deserts and the mountains, and reduced to a state of dependence on the special providence of God for the bread he ate and the water he drank,—enjoyed a sufficiency of all things, and lived in honour and esteem

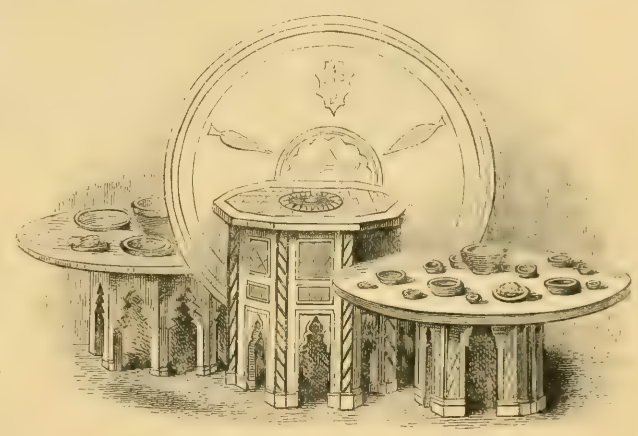
* The same place which is otherwise called Rabbath-Moab, and, classically, Areopolis.

among his countrymen; and even among the purple and fine linen of king's courts, the rough mantle of the prophet was regarded with respect.

In such a history as the present it is only necessary to report those of his acts which were connected with, or bore upon, the public history of the nation; yet his more private acts may be also briefly indicated for the sake of the illustration which they afford of the spirit and manners of the time.

The first of his operations which we read of, after that which connected him with the deliverance of Israel and the defeat of the Moabites, was an act of benevolence towards the widow of one of those "sons of the prophets" who had now come under his supervision. He had died without having the means of satisfying a debt he had incurred,* in consequence of which the creditor was disposed to indemnify himself by making bondsmen of her two sons; but on her complaint to Elisha, he multiplied a small quantity of oil which she possessed, until the price it brought more than sufficed to pay the implacable creditor.

The occasions of the prophet frequently led him to visit the city of Shunem, which being observed by a benevolent woman, she suggested to her husband that they should prepare a small separate apartment,† and furnish it with a bed, a table, a seat, and a lamp; and that this should be reserved for his use when he visited Shunem. This was accordingly done, and the prophet accepted the hospitalities of these good Shunemites. Elisha was very sensible of their kind attention, and wished to repay it by some substantial benefit. He sent for the woman, and offered to speak to the king or to the captain of the host on her behalf. This she declined; and the prophet felt at a loss what to do for them, until it was suggested by his servant Gehazi that the woman had long been childless, on which Elisha again sent for her, and as she stood respectfully at the door, he conveyed to her the astonishing intimation that, nine months from thence, her arms should embrace a son. Accordingly, the child was born, and had grown up, when one day he received a stroke of the sun on his head, and died very soon. The mother laid him on the prophet's bed, and actuated by an undefinable, but intelligible impulse, sought and obtained the permission of her husband to go to Elisha, who was known to be then at Carmel. Accordingly an ass was saddled, on which, driven by a servant on foot,‡ she sped to that place. Elisha saw her afar off, and said to Gehazi, "Behold, yonder is the Shunemite! Run now, I pray thee, and say to her,—Is it well with thee? well with thy husband? well with the child?" The bereaved mother answered, "Well," but pressed on towards the man of God. On approaching him she alighted from her beast, and threw herself at his feet, on which she laid hold. The officious Gehazi drew nigh to thrust her away, but Elisha checked him,—"Let her alone; for her soul is troubled within her: although Jehovah hath hidden from me the cause, and hath not told me of it." When, in a few broken exclamations, she had made known the cause of her grief, the prophet gave his staff to Gehazi, with instructions to go and lay it on the face of the child. But the mother



[Tables. Modern Oriental.]

* The Jews think the person was Obadiah, and that his debt was contracted on account of the expense of maintaining the hundred prophets whom he concealed in caverns.

† Called in our version "a little chamber in the wall." It denotes doubtless what the Arabs still call by the same name (Oleah), which is a small building, generally at some distance from the house, like a summer-house in our gardens.

‡ It is still the usual practice in the East for a man on foot to lead or drive the ass on which a woman rides.



[Application to a Santon.]

refused to leave the prophet, and he was induced to rise and return with her. They met Gehazi on his way back, who told them, "The child is not awaked!" They hasted on, and the prophet shut himself up with the child. It was not long before he directed the mother to be called, and presented to her the *living* boy.



[Seething Pottage.]

Another time, when there was a dearth in the land, Elisha was at the school of the prophets at Gilgal; and at the proper time, gave the order to the servants, "Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets." When this was dressed, it was found that a wild and bitter gourd had been gathered and shred into the pot by mistake. "O man of God! there is death in the pot!" cried the sons of the prophets, when they began to eat. But Elisha directed a handful of meal to be cast into the pot, and it was found that all the poisonous qualities of the pottage had disappeared.

In the kingdom of Damascene-Syria, the chief captain of the host, high in the favour and confidence of the king, was a person called Naaman, who had the misfortune of being a leper. This, which would have been a disqualification for all employment aud society in Israel, could not but be a great annoyance and distress to a public man in Syria. When therefore a little Hebrew girl, who in a former war had been taken captive, and was now a slave in the household of this personage, was heard to say, "Would to God my lord were with the prophet, that is in Samaria, for he would recover him of his leprosy!" she was eagerly questioned on the matter, and the result was that the king of Syria sent Naaman, with a spledid retinue and camels laden with presents* to Samaria, with a sufficiently laconic letter to the king Jehoram. "When this letter cometh to thee, thou must recover from his leprosy Naaman, my servant. Behold, I have sent him with it." The king of Israel was utterly confounded when he read this epistle. He rent his clothes, and cried, "Am I a god, to kill and to make

* The presents included ten talents of silver (3750*l.*), 6000 shekels of gold (12000*l.*), and ten dresses of honour.



[Great Officer on a Journey.]

alive, that this man sendeth to me to recover a man of his leprosy. Consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh an occasion of quarrelling with me." Intelligence of this affair, and of the king's vexation, was brought to Elisha, who desired that the Syrian stranger might be sent to him. Accordingly Naaman came with his chariot and horses and imposing retinue, and stood before the door of Elisha's house. The prophet did not make his appearance; but sent out a message directing him to go and bathe seven times in the river Jordan. The self-esteem of the distinguished leper was much hurt at this treatment. He expected that Elisha would have paid him personal attention and respect, and would have healed him by an appeal to his God, Jehovah, and by the stroking of his hand. He therefore turned and went away in a rage, exclaiming, " Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them and be clean?" His attendants, however, succeeded in soothing him, and persuaded him to follow the prophet's directions; and when he rose, perfectly cleansed, from the Jordan, his feelings turned to conviction and gratitude; he returned to Samaria, and presented himself to the prophet, declaring his belief that Jehovah was the true and only God, and that henceforth he would offer burnt-offerings and sacrifices to no other. He would also have pressed upon his acceptance a valuable present, but this was firmly declined by Elisha; and when his covetous servant Gehazi, compromised the honour of God and of his own master, by following the Syrian, to ask a gift in the name of the prophet, the leprosy from which Naaman had been cleansed was declared by the prophet to be the abiding portion of him and of his race.

These and other miracles wrought by this prophet, fixed upon him *personally* the regard and veneration of the people; and while there is reason to think that the state of manners and of religion was not altogether so bad as it had been under Ahab, the practices and ideas of their corrupt system of religion was now too closely interwoven with their habits of life and mind to be easily shaken off. They rested on their intermediate system. Habit had reconciled even their consciences to it; and in general, to fall back upon it, after having strayed into

foreign idolatries, was in their sight a complete and perfect reformation. And as to the race of Ahab, *that* was hastening with rapid strides to its doom. The famine which about this time desolated the land, and the new war with the Syrians, which was carried on under the very walls of the capital, was met by the king without any fixed faith, or any determinate rule of conduct; sometimes he attributed his calamities to Elisha, and vowed his destruction; and at others he resorted to that same prophet as to his only friend and deliverer.

In this war the Syrians had laid an ambuscade, in which the king would undoubtedly have perished had not Elisha ensured his safety by discovering the plan of the enemy to him. This happened more than once; and the Syrian king at first suspected treachery in his own camp; but being assured that it was owing to Elisha, "who could tell the king of Israel the words he spoke in his bed-chamber," he was much irritated, and, with singular infatuation, despatched a column of his best troops to invest the town of Dothan, where the prophet then abode, in such a manner that his escape seemed impossible to his own terrified servant. "Fear not," said Elisha, "for they that are with us are more than they that are with them;" and then, praying that his eyes might be opened to the view of "things invisible to mortal sight," he beheld the mountain full of chariots and horses, glowing like fire, round about the prophet. At his request, the Syrian troop was then smitten with blindness, and in that condition he went among them, and conducted them to the very gates of the hostile metropolis, Samaria, where their eyes were opened, and he dismissed them in peace, after inducing Jehoram to give them refreshment, instead of slaying them, as was his own wish. This generous conduct seems to have had such good effect that the Syrian hordes for the present abandoned their enterprise, and returned to their own country.

After this came on a severe famine, of seven years continuance, and the evils of it were aggravated by war, for the Syrian king deemed this season of weakness and exhaustion too favourable for his designs to be neglected. He marched directly to Samaria, and formally invested that strong place, which, seemingly, he hoped less to gain by force of arms than by so blockading it as ultimately to starve it into a surrender; which work, he knew, was already more than half accomplished to his hands. The siege was protracted until the inhabitants were driven to the most horrible shifts to prolong their miserable existence. We are told that an ass's head was sold for eighty silver shekels,* and the fourth part of a cab † of vetches for five shekels.‡ In this case the extremity of the famine is shown not merely by the cost of the articles, but by the fact that the flesh of an ass, for which such an enormous price was now paid, was forbidden by the law,§ and could not be touched by a Hebrew under ordinary circumstances.

One day as the king was passing along the ramparts, two women importunately demanded justice at his hands. They had between them slain, boiled, and eaten the son of one of them, with the understanding that the son of the other was next to be sacrificed to satisfy their wants. But the mother of the living son relented, and refused to yield him to so horrible a fate. This was the injustice of which the mother of the slaughtered child complained, and for which she clamoured for redress. When the king heard this shocking case, he rent his clothes, which gave the people present occasion to observe that his inner dress was the sackcloth of a mourner. He might have remembered that such calamities had been threatened, ages back, by Moses, as the suitable punishment of such iniquities as those into which Israel had actually fallen.|| His indignation, however, turned against Elisha (who had, perhaps, encouraged him to hold out by promises of deliverance), and he swore that he should lose his head that day, and instantly despatched an officer to execute an intention so worthy of the son of Jezebel. But the messenger was no sooner gone than he relented, and went hastily after him, to revoke the order, and to excuse himself to Elisha. This moment of right feeling was the moment in which deliverance was announced. "Thus saith Jehovah," said the

* Equal to 10*l*. of our money. † The fourth part of a cab was less than a pint of our measure.

‡ 12*s*. 6*d*. of our money.

§ No animal food was allowed but that of animals which ruminate *and* divide the hoof. The ass does neither; and was therefore for food more unclean than even the hog, which does divide the hoof although it does not ruminate.

|| Deut. xxviii. 52—57.

prophet, when the king stood in his presence, "to-morrow about this time shall a seah * of fine flour be sold for a shekel, and two seahs of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria." This appeared so utterly incredible to the courtier "on whose arm the king leaned," that he said, "Behold, were Jehovah to open windows in heaven, then this thing might be." To which the prophet severely retorted, "Behold, *thou* shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof."



[A King supported.]

In fact, during the following night, Jehovah caused the Syrians to hear a great noise of chariots and horses, which led them to conclude that Jehoram had contrived to obtain assistance from the king of Egypt and other neighbouring princes; and this infused into them such a panic terror, that they precipitately raised the siege; and, in the belief that they were pursued by a puissant army come to the relief of Israel, they abandoned the camp with all their baggage and provisions. Towards the morning, some lepers, who, as such, abode without the town, made up their minds to go to the camp of the Syrians seeking food; for they concluded that it was better to risk death by the Syrian sword than to die of famine where they were. On reaching the camp they found it deserted, and after satisfying their present wants, and appropriating to their own use some good things from the spoil, they proceeded to bear their glad tidings to the city. The king was slow to believe them, and suspected the whole to be a stratagem of the Syrians. Men were therefore mounted on two of the five only horses now remaining, and sent to make observations. The report with which they returned was quite conformable to that of the lepers. The people then left the city, and hastened to pillage the camp of the Syrians, in which provisions were found in such abundance that a market was established at the gate of Samaria,† where, as the prophet had predicted, a seah of wheat was sold for a shekel, and two seahs of barley for the same. The officer who refused to believe this prediction was placed by the king to preserve order at the gate; but so great was the press of the famishing multitude to obtain corn, that he was thrown down and trodden to death. Thus was accomplished the other prediction, that he should see the truth of the first prophecy without enjoying its benefits.

We know not precisely how long after this the seven years of famine terminated. Of these years the hospitable Shunemite had been warned by Elisha, and had withdrawn to a neighbouring country; on which the state assumed the possession of her lands. After the famine was over, she returned, and came before the king to petition for the restoration of the property. At that time the servant of Elisha was engaged in giving the king an account of the various miracles wrought by his master, and when the woman appeared, he was relating how her son had been restored to life. The relater then said, "My lord, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life." The king was struck by this coincidence, and proceeded to question her on the subject, and ended with directing that not only should the lands be restored to her, but the value of their produce during the years of her absence.

* Somewhat more than a peck.

† It is still not unusual in the East for the wholesale market for country produce and cattle to be held (for a short time in the early morning) at the gates of towns. Manufactured goods are sold and fruits *retailed* in the bazaars within the towns.



[Market at Gate.]

This was a very becoming act, and, like several other recorded acts of Jehoram, worthy of commendation; but it is not by particular acts, however laudable, that the sins of a criminal life can be covered: and the fulfilment of the doom pronounced upon the house of Ahab was now near at hand.

Jehoram was desirous of pursuing his recent advantage over the Syrians to the extent of taking from them the city of Ramoth in Gilead, which still remained in their possession. Fortified by an alliance with his nephew Ahaziah, king of Judah, he therefore declared war against Hazael, whom a revolution, predicted by Elisha, had placed upon the throne of Damascene-Syria, in the room of Ben-hadad. Ramoth was invested by the two kings; and before that place, where Ahab had received his death-wound, Jehoram was also wounded by an arrow—not mortally, but so seriously that he withdrew to Jezreel to be healed, leaving the conduct of the siege to Jehu, the son of Nimshi. The king of Judah also returned to Jerusalem, but afterwards proceeded to Jezreel to visit his wounded relative.

At this juncture Elisha sent one of the sons of the prophet to execute the commission, long since entrusted to Elijah, of anointing Jehu as king of Israel. He arrived at the time when the chief officers of the army besieging Ramoth were together. He called out Jehu, and anointed him in an inner chamber, delivering at the same time the announcement of his call to the throne of Israel, and to be Jehovah's avenger upon the house of Ahab. No sooner had he done this, than he opened the door and fled. Jehu returned to his companions, as if nothing had happened. But they had noticed the prophetic garb of the person who had called him out, and it being the fashion of those days to speak contemptuously of the prophetic calling, they asked, "On what business came this mad fellow to thee?" Jehu affected some reluctance to tell them; but this made them the more urgent; and when he made the fact known to them, it was so agreeable to their own wishes, that they instantly tendered him their homage, and proclaimed him king by sound of trumpet, and with cries of "Jehu is king!" At his desire, measures were taken to prevent this intelligence from spreading for the present; in consequence of which king Jehoram and king Ahaziah remained at Jezreel, quite unsuspicious of what had occurred. But one day the watchman announced the distant approach of a large party; and the king of Israel sent, successively, two messengers to ascertain whether it came with peaceable designs or not. But as they did not return, and the

watchman having in the mean time ascertained from his manner of driving his chariot, that the principal person was Jehu, the two kings went forth themselves to meet him. They met in the fatal field of Naboth. "Is it peace, Jehu?" the king inquired of the general; who answered, "What peace as long as the idolatries of thy mother Jezebel and her sorceries are so many?" On hearing which Jehoram cried to the king of Judah, "There is treachery, O Ahaziah!" and turned his chariot to escape. But Jehu drew his bow with all his force, and the arrow which he discharged smote the king between the shoulders, and went through his heart. Jehu directed the body to be taken from the chariot and left on that ground, reminding Bidkar, his captain, to whom he gave this order, that they were together in attendance upon Ahab in that very place, when the prophet Elijah appeared and denounced that doom upon his house, and the bloody requital in that spot, which was now being accomplished.

Ahaziah also attempted to escape; but Jehu directed some of his followers to pursue and smite him in his chariot. They did so, and wounded him: but he continued his flight till he reached Megiddo, where he died of his wounds. His body was removed to Jerusalem for sepulture.*

Jehu entered Jezreel. The news of what had happened preceded him: and Jezebel tired her head, and painted her eyes, and looked out of a window; and this she did, we should imagine, not with any view of trying the power of her allurements upon Jehu—for she was by this time an aged woman—but for state, and to manifest to the last the pride and royalty of her spirit. As Jehu drew nigh, she called to him, "Had Zimri peace, who slew his master?" But this was the day of vengeance and of punishment, and not of relentings; and Jehu looked up and cried, "Who is on my side, who?" On which two or three eunuchs of the harem looked out to him. "Throw her down!" was the unflinching command of Jehu. So they threw her down, and some of her blood was sprinkled upon the wall, and upon the horses that trod upon her. After this, Jehu went into the palace, and ate and drank; and he then said, "Go, look after this accursed woman, and bury her: for she was a king's daughter." But it was then found that all the body, except the skull, the feet, and the palms of her hands, had been devoured by such ravenous dogs as those by which eastern cities are still infested. "This," said Jehu, "is the word of Jehovah, which he spake by the mouth of Elijah the Tishbite, saying, In the district of Jezreel shall dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel; and the carcass of Jezebel shall be as dung upon the face of the field in the district of Jezreel; so that they shall not say, This is Jezebel."

Ahab had left not fewer than seventy sons, and these were all in Samaria, which was not only the metropolis but one of the strongest places in the kingdom; and Jehu, reflecting, probably, on what happened after the death of Zimri,—when two kings reigned, one, like himself, a military leader upheld by the army, whom a portion of the nation refused to acknowledge, and adhered to another,—apprehended that something similar might again occur. He therefore wrote to the chief persons of Samaria, and to those who had the charge of Ahab's children,† to sound their intentions. He told them that they were in a well fortified city, with troops, chariots, and arms; and that, being thus circumstanced, they had better set up one of Ahab's sons for king, and fight for him, letting the crown be the prize of the conqueror. And this, really, was the only course which men faithful and attached to the dynasty of Omri could have taken. This the chief persons and guardians of the princes in Samaria were not,—or not to the extent of risking the consequences of civil war, and of opposition to Jehu. In fact, they were intimidated by his promptitude in action, and at the manner in which the two kings and Jezebel had been disposed of; and there was something

* This is the account given in the Book of Kings (2 Kings ix. 27—29); but another account (2 Chron xxii. 9) says he hid himself in Samaria, where he was discovered and put to death. From this difference it may seem that some circumstances are omitted, by which the two accounts might be reconciled. But as we do not know with certainty how to reconcile them; we have given one of the accounts only in the text, and have preferred that in Kings solely because it is that which Josephus has followed.

† From the expression that they were "with the great men of the city, who brought them up," we infer that, as is still usual in some eastern countries, the king relieved himself from the charge of their maintenance, by consigning one young prince to this great person, and another to another, to be maintained and educated as became their station. This charge is to be received as an honour and distinction, and is sometimes of ultimate benefit; but on account of the great expense and inconvenience, it is often received with dissatisfaction, and many would decline it if they dared.

calculated to damp their spirits (if they had any) in a message which showed that Jehu was prepared for the most resolute course they could take. They replied,—"We are thy servants, and will do all that thou shalt bid us; we will not make any man king: do thou what is good in thine eyes." Jehu's reply was prompt, and horribly decisive,—"If ye be for me, and will hearken to my voice, take off the heads of your master's sons, and come to me to Jezreel by this time to-morrow." When this letter arrived the seventy princes were instantly decapitated, and their heads sent in baskets to Jezreel. When Jehu heard of their arrival, he, according to a barbarous eastern custom not yet extinct, directed them to be piled up in two heaps at the entrance of the city-gate until the morning. In the morning he went out to the assembled people, and with the evident design of pointing out the extent to which the house of Ahab wanted any hearty adherents, even among those who might be supposed most attached to its interests, he said,—"Ye are righteous. Behold, I conspired against my master, and slew him: but who hath slain all these? Now know, that nothing of the word of Jehovah, which he spoke concerning the house of Ahab, shall fall to the ground; for Jehovah will do what he spoke by his servant Elijah."

Jehu delayed not to go to Samaria, and in his way encountered some of the brothers of Ahaziah, the king of Judah, who, ignorant of the late occurrences, were on their way to visit the sons of Ahab. Regarding their connection by blood and friendship with the house of Ahab, Jehu considered them included in his commission to exterminate that house root and branch. He therefore commanded them to be arrested and slain. Their number was forty-two.

In his further progress Jehu met with Jonadab, the son of Rechab, a pastoral religionist held in high esteem by the people, and whose influence with them was very great. Jehu, with his usual tact, at once felt the advantage which the countenance of this person might be to his cause. He therefore accosted him,—"Is thy heart as right with my heart, as my heart is with thine?" Jonadab answered, "It is." "If it be," said Jehu, "give to me thy hand." And he gave him his hand, and Jehu took him up into his chariot, saying, "Come and see my zeal for Jehovah!" They thus entered Samaria together, where Jehu completed the destruction of the house of Ahab by cutting off all its remaining members.

In Samaria Ahab had erected a celebrated temple to the idol Baal. On entering the town Jehu declared an intention to aggrandise the worship of that god, and render to him higher honours than he had yet received in Israel. He was therefore determined to celebrate a great feast in honour of Baal, to which he convoked all the priests, prophets, and votaries of that idol. The concourse was so great that the temple was filled from one end to another; and while they were in the midst of their idolatrous worship, Jehu sent in a body of armed men who put them all to the sword. The idols, and the implements and ornaments of idol worship, were then overthrown, broken, or reduced to ashes; and the temple itself was demolished, and turned into a common jakes. But the worship of Baal was far from being confined to Samaria, and Jehu sought for it in all quarters of the land, and rooted it out wherever it was found. His conduct in this matter was so well pleasing to God, that the throne of Israel was, by a special promise, assured to his posterity unto the fourth generation.

CONTEMPORARY KINGS.

Kings of Israel.		Kings of Judah.	
Ahab	B.C. 931	Jehoshaphat	B.C. 929
Ahaziah	909	——	——
Jehoram or Joram	907	Jehoram or Joram	904
——	——	Ahaziah	896
Died	895	Died	895

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES.

(1) THE KINGS OF TYRE, p. 564.—This king, whose daughter Jezebel was Ahab's queen, is mentioned by Menander under the name Ithobalus. [*Josephus against Apion*, i. 18.] This accurate historian, on the authority of the Tyrian annals, thus enumerates the kings of Tyre that succeeded Hiram, the contemporary of Solomon:—

"After the death of Hiram, his son Balnazarus succeeded him on the throne, who lived forty-three years, and reigned seven. Next to him his son Abdastartus, who lived twenty-nine years, and reigned nine. He was murdered by the four sons of his nurse, the eldest of whom reigned twelve years. Then Astartus, the son of Deleastartus, who lived fifty-four years, and reigned twelve. Next, his brother Aserymus, who lived fifty-four years, and reigned nine. He was slain by his brother Pheletes, who then ascended the throne. He lived fifty years, and reigned eight months. Ithobalus, a priest of Astarte, put him to death, and assumed the sceptre. He lived sixty-eight years, and reigned thirty-two. His successor was his son, Badezorus, who lived forty-five years, and reigned six. His son and successor, Margenus, lived thirty-two years, and reigned nine. Pygmalion succeeded him, who lived fifty-six years, and reigned forty-seven. In the seventh year of his reign, his sister Dido fled, and built Carthage in Libya."

According to this, the time from the death of Hiram to the beginning of the reign of Ithobalus is about fifty-years; and from the death of Solomon to the beginning of Ahab's reign are fifty-seven years. Hiram, who was already king in the time of David, and reigned only thirty-two years, must have died at least ten years before Solomon, and consequently from the death of Hiram to Ahab, about sixty-seven years elapsed. If all these numbers are correct, Ahab must have married Jezebel after he became king. But allowance must be made for the mistakes which transcribers are apt to make in copying numerals. We here see the reason why Jezebel, the daughter of a priest of Astarte, was so zealous a promoter of idolatry; and as twenty-one years after the death of Ithobalus, his grand-daughter Dido built Carthage and founded that celebrated commonwealth, we may judge what sort of a spirit animated the females of this royal family. Hence we shall feel less surprise that Jezebel should have exerted such an influence over the king and kingdom of Israel, and that her daughter Athaliah afterwards took possession of the throne of Judah. And the fact that a son of the king's nurse was able to place himself on the throne confirms the opinion which has been more than once stated in this work, that in the East nurses held a very important rank in families.—JAHN, book v. sect. 36.

(2) ELIJAH FED BY ARABS, p. 565.—The necessities of an historical statement required the adoption of one of the different alternatives of interpretation which have been applied to this subject; and as the one which has been preferred is different from that which has generally been received, and which most translations of the Scriptures embody, a few words of explanation will be expected by many readers of this work.

That the word עֹרְבִים pointed by the Masoretes so as to be pronounced *orebim*, (sing. *oreb*) undoubtedly means *ravens*, is unquestionable; and this therefore is the sense which our present pointed copies of the Hebrew Scriptures would convey. But the Masoretic points form a system of *interpretation*, which a very large number (probably a majority) of Hebrew scholars refuse to regard as conclusive. As most of our readers probably know, these points, representing the vowels, have the effect of fixing one precise signification to many words, just as to the consonants *grn*, the different sense of *grain, grin, groan*, &c., are given by the difference of the interposed vowels. These vowels thus restrict to a particular meaning a word the sense of which we should otherwise have to collect from the context, or from tradition. Now the Hebrew text was written and remained for many ages without vowel points; and these points were added by the Jewish doctors to fix the sense, which, without such a resource, was likely to lose its uniformity of interpretation, after the race became dispersed among all nations. Now, although these doctors rendered a valuable service to Scriptural interpretation by their very arduous labour, and although their determinations, taken in the mass, doubtless convey the received and traditionary sense which was in their time assigned to the text, we are by no means bound in every instance to their decisions, particularly as in many cases they will be found, when many alternatives lay

before them, to have chosen the most marvellous and strange rather than that which the context would most obviously suggest.

Now in the present case, the word, ערבים, as taken *without* the points may mean *ravens*, or *Arabians*, or *Orebim* as a proper name, or *strangers*. Now it is certain that any person finding the word without vowels, and left to find the meaning from the context, would not for a moment think of *ravens*, but would fix on one of the other alternatives. As to the Orebim, there was a rock called Oreb,* the inhabitants near which may be supposed to have been so called ; but this was on the other side of the Jordan. And with reference to the Arabians, nothing seems to us more likely than that encampments of Arabs (who still intrude their tents into the border or waste lands of settled countries) would, in this season of drought, have been formed on the banks of the brook Cherith, and (knowing the scarcity of water elsewhere) would have remained there as long as it afforded water to them—that is, as long as Elijah remained. They were also, both from their condition and habits, the very persons in whose keeping the secret of his retreat was most safe—far more so than it would have been with any townsmen, subjects of Ahab. They were the least likely to know his person, and that he was sought after by the king; and if they did know, they were less than any other persons open to the inducements the king could offer, or the fears he could impose. If however the reader prefers to hold that the well-disposed inhabitants of a town called Oreb or Orbo, were the parties by whom Elijah was supplied with food, there are good authorities to support him in that conclusion, and to show that a small town of that name did exist near at hand.

As to the *ravens*, we can easily conceive that, in an age when the love of the marvellous had become absolutely a mania among the Jews, they would by choice select of many interpretations the most unlikely and wonderful: and we feel as assured that, having the present alternatives before them, they would, from their instinctive marvellousness, fix on *this*, as we are that this is the very one which, of all the others, a man of plain understanding would reject. Indeed, the opportunity of determining the sense to *ravens* must to a Jew have been too delicious to be neglected, since it afforded excellent opportunities of amplifying and illustrating the matter in his own peculiar vein.

We have stated this without any wish to lessen a miracle, as we feel that, by this time, our readers will be satisfied. But since the unnecessary multiplication of miracles tends to their depreciation, we have felt induced to state our impressions. Indeed, the difficulties attending the common opinion have greatly embarrassed the commentators. Of this Dr. Hales (who takes the view that the inhabitants of a place called Oreb are denoted) gives the following from the 'Synopsis' of the elaborate Poole, as an example:—

"Unquestionably they brought meat *dressed*, not raw, Gen. ix. 4. You may ask, *where did the ravens get it?* Ans. 1. From the kitchen of king Ahab or Jehoshaphat. 2. Or it was prepared for him by some of the seven thousand, to whom God communicated the secret, 1 Kings xix. 8. Or, 3. The *angels* perhaps exposed the meat in some certain place, whence the ravens brought it. 4. Where the ravens could procure it, He could provide who gave them such a commission, and who could effect this in a thousand ways."—"God prepared a table for his servant in the utmost penury. He did not take care that *wine* should be brought him." Hales properly remarks on this—"Such a comment, put out of a learned language into plain English, can only excite a smile, mingled with regret, that literary talent should be so wasted or misemployed on idle speculation." We should add that the Jewish interpreters have not only suggested the alternatives mentioned by Poole, but several others, among which one is, that the meat was a portion of that which Obadiah provided for the prophets whom he concealed in the caverns. —But enough of this.

(3) Human Sacrifice, p. 572.—The instance in the text is the most clear and unequivocal example of human sacrifice which can possibly be adduced, and is not liable to the softening explanations which have been applied to many of the *incidental* allusions to human sacrifices which the sacred books contain. We have thus made choice of it as the text to which a few observations on the subject may very suitably be appended. After the notice which has been taken of the subject in a work which is probably in the possession of most of our readers,* we are not willing again to pass over the ground we have already trodden, and shall confine our present observations to the illustrations which may be derived from the antiquities of Egypt, showing that the practice did exist among that people; hence deducing the inference that if the practice existed among a

* Judges vii. 25.

* The 'Pictorial Bible.'


[1. Human Sacrifice.]

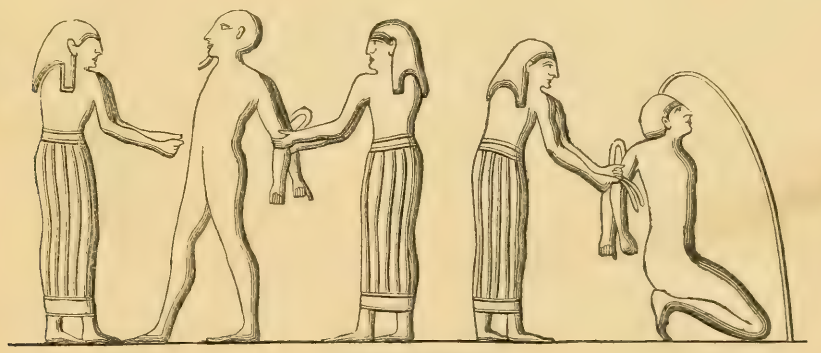
people so civilised, how much more among less refined nations, how strong the temptation to it must have been, and how necessary the strong interdiction and preclusion of it by the law, seeing how well acquainted the Hebrews were with the practices of their Egyptian neighbours, and how prone to imitate them.

The cut at the head of this page is a portion of a row of figures, depicted in the tomb first discovered at Thebes, by Belzoni. This is indisputably a scene of human sacrifice to the serpent, which was so extensively worshipped throughout the East, and traces of which are offered by the idolatrous homage which the Hebrews ultimately came to pay to the brazen serpent which Moses set up in the wilderness, and which was preserved in the temple. With reference to this representation Dr. Richardson states:—" Here we were presented with an exhibition which it would be more agreeable to my feelings to hide from the light, and cover with the veil of oblivion; but truths must be told; here a human sacrifice stares us in the face. Three human beings rest upon their knees with their heads struck off; the attitude in which they implored for mercy is that in which they met their doom; and the serpent opposite erects his crest on a level with their throats, ready to drink the stream of life as it gurgles from their veins. The executioner brandishes the ensanguined knife, ready to sever from the body the heads of three other unfortunate men who are lying prostrate, and held by a string behind him.* The Christian's yoke is easy, and his burden is light. See what paganism exacted from its votaries!"†

To this we have only to add that the executioner is a priest, which concurs with all the other circumstances to show beyond dispute the *religious* character of the exhibition. It may also be noticed that, from the complexion, hair, and costume, the victims are obviously native Egyptians.

* This portion of the scene has been omitted in our cut for want of room.

† Richardson's 'Travels along the Mediterranean,' vol. i. p. 299.

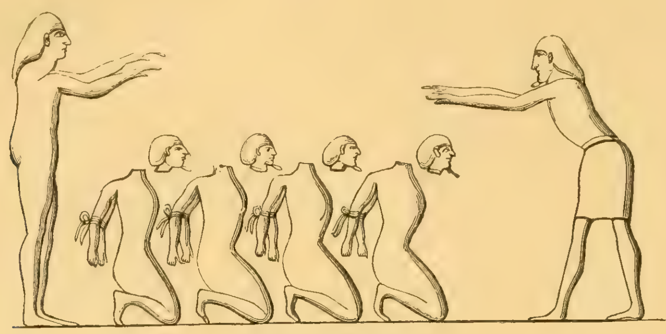

[2. Human Sacrifice.]

The cut now added is from another of the royal tombs in the same place,* and are parts of a row in which a number of men are represented as undergoing the same treatment which is here shown. In this, men are in the act of having their arms bound behind them: others thus bound are represented on their knees while the blood spouts in a full stream from a mortal wound which has been inflicted by striking some weapon into the crown of their heads. In this case not only is the mode of death unusually horrible, but the

* *Biban el Melook, i. e.* the Gates of the Kings, at Thebes.

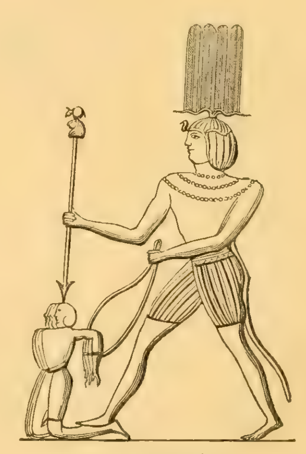
active agents, who bind the victims and hold them behind as they bleed to death, are *women*. This, as well as the peculiarity of the mode of death, would seem clearly enough to indicate a religious intention in this immolation; for it is altogether unlikely and incredible that women should be parties in such a matter otherwise than as priestesses of the deity to whom the victims are offered.

And whatever sense be given to this act must be equally ascribed to that which follows, seeing that it is found in the same



[3. Human Sacrifice.]

tomb, and under the same circumstances, both being in fact two of various scenes of immolation and carnage which the tomb exhibits. Let it also be noted that the cut at the head of the last page is from another of these tombs, and as THAT is a self-evident scene of human sacrifice, it is obvious to infer that the corresponding but less definite scenes in the other tombs have the same object. It is true that M. Jomard * thinks the scenes that the subjects represented in the two preceding cuts represent the immolation of slaves at the funeral of kings. But the tomb which affords the first of our cuts had not been discovered when this author wrote, and he wanted the illustration it was calculated to afford to the others. Besides, we have no historical knowledge that the practice of immolating victims at the sepulture of kings, existed among the Egyptians, whereas we have the distinct testimony of ancient writers that the practice of human sacrifice did exist among them. It is therefore safer to refer such exhibitions to an ascertained than to an unascertained practice. But, indeed, what is such immolation in itself but one of human sacrifice, in which a religious principle is distinctly involved? Sir J. G. Wilkinson, who throughout his works keeps the subject as much as possible out of view, from a very pardonable unwillingness to bring forward into broad light a matter so disparaging to the "civilization" of a people whom he has made it the business of his life to comprehend, and—from the influence of that devotedness to a single object—to extol and magnify. In this pursuit we sympathise; but not being as yet far gone in the Egyptomania, we have felt at liberty on a former occasion,* as now, to bring forward what this distinguished antiquarian would wish to withdraw from notice, and to unveil what he would desire to cover. The reader will not be surprised that in his ample description of these tombs,† the only mention of these murderous scenes is in the slight and apologetic notice—that *they appear to represent human sacrifices*, but probably refer to the initiation into the higher mysteries, by the supposed death and regeneration of the neophyte. We shall not add anything to what



[4. Human Sacrifice.]

* 'Descript. Gen. de Thèbes, in Descript. de l'Egypte,' tom. iii. p. 198.

* See before, at p. 390.

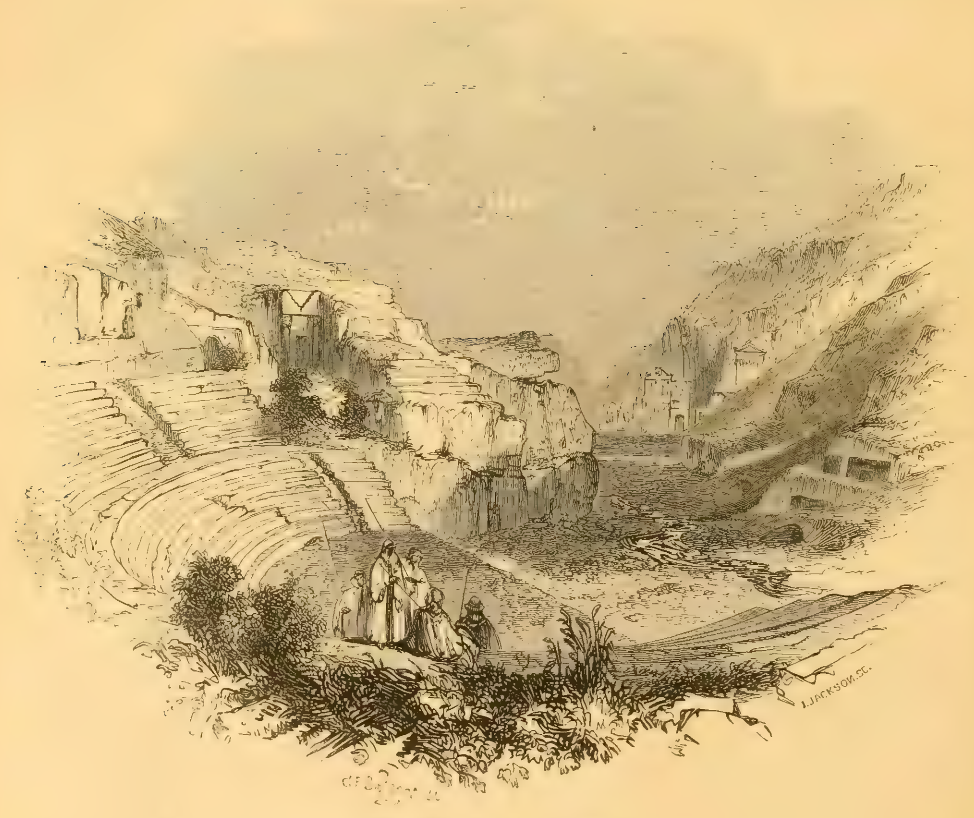
† 'Topography of Thebes,' chap. ii.

we have already said (p. 390) against this most unsatisfactory principle of interpretation. If it were true *in this case*, we should expect to see the persons slain in one part of the representation resuscitated in another—but where is this?

As a suitable appendage to this note, we have introduced (fig. 4) one of those constantly repeated representations of the wholesale immolation of captives before the gods, which so often occur in the Egyptian sculptures. With reference to them generally, we have nothing to add here to what has been said before (pp. 390, 391). But with respect to the particular example now given, it will be observed that the king (for he is a king) has mounted the priestly mitre, to indicate that he is acting as a priest —that is, offering sacrifice, or immolating to his god. The figure of the god to whom the offering is made is, indeed, introduced in the original, but has been omitted by our artist. The manner in which he strikes his heavy dart successively into the brains of the miserable victims explains the manner in which the death-wound was inflicted upon the person represented in the second of our present cuts. The one now last offered is from a sculpture upon the portico of the palace-temple at Medinet Abou.

CHAPTER VII.

JUDAH, FROM 929 B.C., TO 725 B.C.



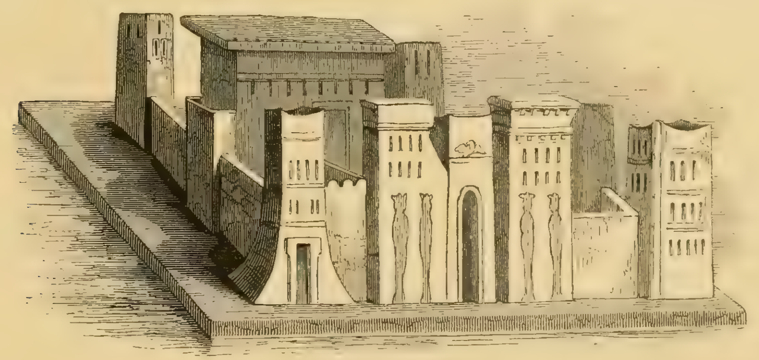
[Petra. Mount Seir. From Laborde.]

JEHOSHAPHAT, the son of Asa, began to reign over Judah in the year 929 B.C., being the second year of Ahab in Israel. The alliance which he formed with Ahab has brought him forward, in the preceding chapter, sufficiently to intimate to the reader the excellent character which he bore. He indeed takes rank among the most faithful, and *therefore* most illustrious and wise of the Hebrew kings. Direct idolatry had been put down by his father, and the first acts of his own reign were to root out the remoter incentives thereto and instruments thereof. He destroyed the high places(1) and the groves which his father had spared. Other kings before him had been satisfied with external operations; but to his enlightened mind it appeared that effects more deep and permanent might be secured by acting upon the inner

sense of the people, by instructing them fully in the principles and distinguishing privileges of their theocratical system, and by rendering those principles operative, as the standards of public and judicial action, throughout the land. The land had already been purged, as by fire, from the noxious weeds by which it had been overgrown; and now the king made it his business to occupy the cleared soil with corn—the staff of life,—and with fruits "pleasant to the eye, and good for food."

To these ends the king sent out a number of "princes," whose rank and influence secured attention and respect to the priests and Levites who were with them to instruct the people. They had with them copies of the law: and, in their several bands, visited all the towns of the country,—thus bearing instruction to the very doors of a people who had become too indolent or too indifferent themselves to seek for it. So earnest was the king in this object, that he went himself throughout the land to see that his orders were duly executed.

The attention of this able king was also directed to the reform of abuses in other departments of the state, and to the cultivation of the financial and military resources of his kingdom. The people, rendered happy by his cares, grew prosperous, and increased in numbers; in the same degree the real power of the government was strengthened, and was such as inspired the people with confidence, and their enemies with fear. Edom continued firm in its obedience, Philistia regularly remitted its presents and tribute-silver, and several of the Arabian tribes sought his favour, or acknowledged his power, by large yearly tributes of sheep and goats from their flocks. The men enrolled as fit to bear arms, and liable to be called into action, was not less than 1,160,000, which is not far short of the number in the united kingdom in the time of David.* Of these a certain proportion were kept in service. The best of the troops were stationed at Jerusalem, and the remainder distributed into the fortress and walled towns; and a strong force was concentrated on the northern frontier, especially in those lands of Ephraim which Asa had taken from Baasha. New fortresses were constructed in different parts of the country, and were well garrisoned and supplied with all the munitions of war. Of fortresses, and places fortified with walls and towers, of which so much mention is made in the Hebrew history of this period, the following probably afford the most curious, and only really illustrative examples which can now be obtained. They are all ancient Egyptian, and all copied from the celebrated mosaic pavement at Præneste,† and represent portions of the Egyptian cities of—1. Memphis, 2. Babylon, and of 3., a fortress on an island of the Nile.



[1. Fortress. Memphis.]

The capital error of this monarch, the alliance he contracted with Ahab in the thirteenth year of his reign, has already been noticed in the preceding chapter, as well as the part he took in the battle of Ramoth Gilead, in which Ahab was slain, but his own life was preserved,

* 2 Sam. xxiv. 19.
† The history of this may be seen in Montfaucon, tom. xiv., where it is engraved; which engraving has been copied by Shaw, and in Clarke's edition of Harmer's 'Observations.'



[2. Fortress. Babylon.]



[3. Fortress.]

notwithstanding the very imminent danger into which he had fallen. On his return to Jerusalem after this escape, the Divine dissatisfaction at his conduct was announced to him by the prophet Jehu.

After this he engaged himself in his former peaceful and honourable undertakings; and gave particular attention to the administration of justice in his dominions. He established a supreme tribunal (of appeal probably) at Jerusalem, and placed judges in all the principal cities of the country. This great improvement relieved the king from the fatigue and great attention which the exercise of the judicial functions of royalty had exacted from the earlier kings, while it secured to the suitors more prompt attention than they could by any other means receive. The king was very sensible of the importance of this step; and, in his anxiety that it should work well, gave an admirable charge to the judges; the force of which can only be well appreciated by those who perceive that the counteracting evils which he feared were precisely those by which the administration of justice in the East is at this day corrupted and disgraced.—"Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man, but for Jehovah, who is with you in the judgment. Wherefore now, let the fear of Jehovah be upon you; take heed and act uprightly; for with Jehovah our God there is no injustice, no respect of persons, no taking of bribes." This was addressed to the judges appointed to the cities. In the address to the judges of the supreme tribunal at Jerusalem, it is not supposed, by any implication, that they could be partial or corrupt; and they are only reminded of the duty of judging according to the Divine law, the causes that came before them. This tribunal was composed of the most distinguished men among the priests, the Levites, and the family chiefs. In matters pertaining to religion, this tribunal was presided over by the high-priest Amariah, but in civil matters, or those in which the crown was interested, by Zebadiah, "the ruler," or hereditary chief, of the tribe of Judah,—an interesting indication that the forms of the partriarchal were not, even yet, entirely lost in those of the regal government.

About the same time the king made another tour through his dominions, from Beersheba in the south, to Mount Ephraim in the north, seeking to bring back the people more entirely "to Jehovah the God of their fathers." In the northern districts which had been recovered or taken from Israel, the high places of the Ephraimites were not taken away, because they had not as yet "prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers," as had the Judahites, whose high places had been taken away at the beginning of this reign.

The unfortunate expedition with Ahab against Ramoth Gilead being unsuccessful, tended much to lower Jehoshaphat in the estimation of the neighbouring nations; and thus the alliance with the king of Israel brought its own punishment. The Ammonites and Moabites, who had been brought into a state of subjection by David, now began to conceive hopes of deliverance from the yoke under which they lay. It was their policy, however, not in the first instance to revolt from the kingdom to which they were immediately subject—that of Israel, but first to try their strength against the lesser kingdom of Judah. They therefore invaded that country from the south, by the way of Edom, supported by some Arabian hordes, which they had engaged in their cause, and who indeed are seldom loth to engage in any cause by which good prospects of spoil are offered. The expedition assumed the character of an Arabian invasion, and, as such, was so expeditious that the invaders had rounded the southern extremity



Arab Horde coming to a halt.]

of the Dead Sea, and came to a halt in the famous valley of Engedi, before Jehoshaphat had the least intimation of their design. Taken thus by surprise, he was much alarmed in the first instance; but by throwing himself unreservedly upon the protection and help of the Divine King, he ensured the safety of his kingdom, and took the most becoming step which it was possible that a king of the chosen nation could take. He proclaimed a general fast throughout Judah, and the people gathered together from all quarters to Jerusalem, and stood there in and around the temple, to cry to God for help. And he heard them: for the spirit of prophecy fell upon one of the Levites, named Jahaziel, and in the name of Jehovah he directed that they should march to meet the enemy, whose station he indicated, not to fight, but to witness their extirpation and to seize the spoil. As they went forth early in the morning towards the wilderness of Tekoah, Jehoshaphat exerted himself to keep up the confidence of the people in the sufficiency of the Divine protection; and as they proceeded, he directed that the Levitical singers should march in front, and "in the beauty of holiness" (or in the same habits, and after the same manner as in the temple-service), should sing the praises of God, saying, "Praise Jehovah! for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever." Surely never, from the beginning of the world, was there such a march as this against an army of hostile

invaders. The event was such as the prophet had foreshown. It seems that the children of Lot had quarrelled and fought with their Arabian allies; and when they had succeeded in destroying them, they turned their arms against each other, and fought with unextinguishable fury until none remained alive on the battle-field. So that when the Hebrews arrived at the place which the prophet had indicated, many a beating heart among them was relieved, and all were inconceivably astonished, to see the wilderness covered with the bodies of the slain—not one had escaped. The Judahites were three days in collecting an immense spoil of precious metals and stones, and valuable arms and raiment; and in the end it was found that more was collected than could be taken away. On the fourth day they returned home to Jerusalem, before entering which they held a solemn thanksgiving in the Valley of Shaveh, or the King's Dale, hence called the Valley of Berachah (*blessing*), and also the Valley of Jehoshaphat. After this they entered the city in triumphal procession, with music and with singing. The neighbouring nations rightly ascribed this signal deliverance to the God of the Hebrews; and were for some time inspired with a salutary fear of molesting a people so highly favoured.

The next undertaking of Jehoshaphat was an attempt to revive the ancient traffic of Solomon, by the Red Sea, to the region of gold. For this purpose he built a navy at his port of Ezion-geber, at the head of the Elanitic Gulf. But, in an evil day, he consented to allow Ahaziah, the king of Israel, to take part in the enterprise, in consequence of which, as a prophet forewarned him, his ships were wrecked soon after they left the port. Another expedition was proposed by the king of Israel: but Jehoshaphat declined, and appears to have relinquished all further designs of this nature. Josephus informs us that the ships which had been built were too large and unwieldy; and we may infer that Jehoshaphat discovered that he could not accomplish an enterprise of this nature in the want of such skilful ship-wrights and able mariners as those with which the Phœnicians had constructed and manned the ships of Solomon.

One of the last public acts of Jehoshaphat's reign was that of taking part with Jehoram, king of Israel, in an expedition against the Moabites, who had revolted after the death of Ahab. Jehoshaphat was probably the more induced to lend his assistance by the consideration of the recent invasion of his own dominions by the same people. The circumstances and result of this expedition have been related in the preceding chapter. The success which was granted to it is entirely ascribed to the Divine favour towards the king of Judah.

Soon after this Jehoshaphat "slept with his fathers," after he had lived sixty years, and reigned twenty-five.

His eldest son, Jehoram, ascended the throne of Judah in the year 904 B.C., in the thirty-second year of his own age, and in the third year of the reign of his namesake and relative, Jehoram, the son of Ahab, in Israel. This, it will be remembered, was the prince who was married to Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel. The evil effects of this connection began now very manifestly to appear, and preponderated over the good example which the reign of Jehoshaphat had offered. In fact, Athaliah proved her descent by rivalling her mother, Jezebel, in idolatry, in pride, and in the part she took in public affairs after the death of Jehoshaphat. And, to complete the resemblance, she appears to have rendered her husband, as the mere instrument of her will and purposes, quite as effectually as Jezebel rendered Ahab.

It was undoubtedly through her influence that the first act of Jehoram's reign was to destroy his six brothers, whom Jehoshaphat had amply provided for, and stationed (as governors, probably,) in as many fenced cities of Judah. With them perished several of the first persons in the state, who had enjoyed the confidence of the late king, and had been active in promoting his laudable designs. This evidence of her power redoubled the audacity of the proud queen; and soon after, idolatry, which had been banished from Judah during the two preceding reigns, was restored, by public authority, to honour; and the sedulous endeavours made in the two former reigns to reform the religion and morals of the people

gave place to the efforts of new men to corrupt and ruin all. High places, similar to those in Israel, again appeared upon the hills of Judah; and the people were seduced and urged into idolatry and its concomitant abominations.

For these things heavy calamities were denounced against Jehoram, early in his reign, by the prophet Elisha * in a letter: and thus did that great prophet take cognisance of the affairs of Judah also. The evils that he threatened followed soon.

The king of Edom, who assisted the kings of Judah and Israel in the war against Moab, had, according to Josephus, been slain by his revolted subjects, and the new sovereign desired to signalise his accession, and to propitiate his subjects, by freeing them from the tribute to which his father had submitted. This essay was not at first successful; but although once defeated by Jehoram, who still had his father's army under his command, the Edomites succeeded in throwing the yoke of Judah from off their necks, according to the prophecy of Isaac to the founder of that nation.† Emboldened by this, the Philistines also rebelled, and, assisted by the Arabs who bordered on the Cushites, they invaded Judah, plundered and ravaged the whole country, and even Jerusalem and the royal palace. They led away into slavery all the women of the king's harem, except Athaliah, who was spared in anger, and made captive all the royal princes, except Ahaziah, otherwise called Jehoahaz, the youngest of them all. To consummate all, the king himself was smitten with an incurable disease in the bowels, from which he suffered for two years the most horrible torments, and at last, after a reign of eight years, died without being regretted. The voice of the people denied to his remains the honours of a royal burial, and a place in the sepulchre of the kings.

Ahaziah, his youngest son, was twenty-two years old when he succeeded his father. He reigned only one year; for following the evil counsels of his mother and the house of Ahab, he foolishly joined Jehoram of Israel in the war against Hazael king of Syria, the result of which, with his death, inflicted by Jehu, has been recorded in the preceding chapter.

Not Jehu in Israel thirsted more after the blood of Ahab's house, than did Athaliah, in Judah, for the blood of her own children. She had long been the virtual possessor of the supreme power in Judah; but now she disdained an authority so precarious and indirect, and would reign alone. As even the most wicked persons seldom shed blood from absolute wantonness of cruelty, it may be considered that her spirit may have been rendered unusually savage at this time by the sanguinary proceedings of Jehu in Israel against the house to which she herself belonged, and in which she had lost, at one fell swoop, a mother, a brother, and a son, with many other of her near relatives. It must also have appeared to her that the sort of authority she had hitherto exercised, first as queen-consort and then as queen-mother, was now in very great danger; as it might be expected that whichever of her grandsons succeeded to the throne, he would prefer the counsels and guidance of his mother to her own. Here then were two powerful motives,—dread of losing her power, and jealousy of being superseded by another woman,—bringing her to the atrocious resolution of destroying all the children of her own son Ahaziah. She little considered that by this she was fulfilling a part of the mission against the house of Ahab which Jehu himself could not execute; for through herself the taint of Ahab's blood had been given to the house of David. Her fell purpose was promptly executed. All her grandsons were slain in one day, with the exception of Joash, an infant, who was stolen away by his aunt Jehoshebad, the wife of the high-priest Jehoiada and daughter of the late king Ahaziah, and hidden with his nurse in one of the chambers of the temple. Thus, in the providence of God, the royal line of the house of David was preserved from utter extinction. No retreat could have been more secure than that which was chosen for the infant prince; for not only were the apartments of the temple under the sole direction of the priests,

* The Masorete text here reads *Elijah* (2 Chron. xxi. 12) instead of *Elisha*: for Elijah had been translated in the time of Jehoshaphat. 2 Kings iii 11.

† To Esau Isaac said,—"Thou shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck." Gen. xxvii. 40. See also p. 74 of this work.

and to the innermost of which no others had access; but Athaliah had put herself out of the way of obtaining information of the fact by her entire neglect of the temple and the institutions connected with it. And although she did not, indeed could not, actually put down the temple-worship, her preference and favour was given to the temple of Baal, and his high-priest, Mattan, was upheld by her as of equal rank and importance with the high-priest of Jehovah.

Now although the Judahites were but too prone to fall into idolatry, the good effects of the reforms of Asa and Jehoshaphat, and of the principles which the latter had been so careful to inculcate, did not so soon evaporate as to dispose the people generally to approve or concur in the rapid and decisive measures which Athaliah had taken in establishing the worship of Baal; and when to this was added their natural abhorrence of the barbarous massacre which rooted her throne in blood, and their dislike, in common with all orientals, at the public rule of a woman, we have a sufficient explanation of the fact that the public feeling was not with queen Athaliah, and that, indeed, her rule was regarded with such disgust as disposed the people to hail with joy the advent of their hidden king.

Joash remained six years concealed in the secret chambers of the temple, his existence even, much more his presence there, being unknown and unsuspected by Athaliah and others, as it was supposed he had perished in the slaughter of his father's sons. In the seventh year the high-priest Jehoiada judged that the fit time had arrived for the disclosure. He therefore made known the secret to some of the chiefs and military commanders on whom he could depend, and received from them the promise to concur in the bold act of proclaiming and crowning the rightful king. Joash was now only seven years of age; but good reason was seen to prefer the regency of such a man as Jehoiada to the reign of such a woman as Athaliah. The persons whom Jehoiada had admitted to his confidence went about the country gaining over the paternal chiefs, and inducing them, as well as the Levites not on duty, to repair to Jerusalem. When all the adherents thus acquired had come to the metropolis, the high-priest concerted with them the plan of operations. According to this it was determined that the partisans of the young prince should be divided into three bodies, one of which was to guard the prince in the temple, the second to keep all the avenues, and the third was placed at the gate leading to the royal palace. The people were to be admitted as usual to the outer courts. Then the armories of the temple were opened, and the spears, bucklers, and shields of king David were distributed to these parties, as well as to the Levites, who were to form an impenetrable barrier around the king during the ceremony. When all was disposed in this order, the high-priest appeared, leading by the hand the last scion of the royal house of David. He placed him by the pillar where the kings were usually stationed, and having anointed him with the sacred oil, he placed the crown upon his head, arrayed him in royal robes, and gave into his hands the book of the law, on which the usual oaths were administered to him. He was then seated on a throne which had been provided, in doing which he was hailed and recognised by the acclamations of "Long live the king."

By this time Athaliah had observed some indications of an extraordinary movement in the temple; and when these rejoicing clamours broke upon her ear, she hastened thither, and penetrated even to the court of the priests, where the sight met her view of the enthroned boy, crowned, and royally arrayed, while the hereditary chiefs, the military commanders and the Levites, stood at their several stations as in attendance on their king,—the latter, as was their wont in the temple, blowing their trumpets, and playing on their various instruments of music. No sooner did Athaliah behold this, than she rent her clothes, crying, "Treason! treason!" Jehoiada fearing that the guards would kill her on the spot, and thus pollute the holy place with human blood, which was most abhorrent to God, directed them to take her outside the temple courts, and there she was put to death. The king was then conducted with great pomp to the palace, escorted by all his guard, and there took possession of the throne of his fathers.

Jehoiada, who without any formal appointment, appears to have been recognised, with one consent, as the guardian of the king and regent of the kingdom. He availed himself of the favourable dispositions which now existed, to induce the people to renew their ancient covenant

with Jehovah. This precaution had become necessary from the long continuance of an idolatrous government. Actuated by the impulse thus received and the enthusiasm thus excited, and led by the priests and Levites of Jehovah, the people proceeded once more to extirpate the idolatries of Baal. They hastened to his temple, where they slew the high priest Mattan before the altars, and then pulled the whole fabric to the ground. And not only at Jerusalem, but everywhere throughout the land, the temples, altars and monuments of Baal were utterly destroyed.

Jehoiada, being now at the head of affairs, both religious and civil, applied himself with great diligence in bringing into an orderly and efficient condition the administrations of both the court and temple. Those who had signalised their zeal in the restoration of the king, or were otherwise distinguished for their abilities, were appointed to high posts in the state; while the services of the temple were brought back to the models of David and Solomon. The glory of restoring the fabric of the temple he reserved for the king, who accordingly in the twenty-third year of his reign, thoroughly repaired that famous structure, after it had been built nearly one hundred and sixty years; and made numerous vessels of gold and silver for the sacred services, and presented burnt offerings continually during the lifetime of Jehoiada, who died at the great age of one hundred and thirty-seven years. He was honoured with a sepulchre among the kings of the family of David, " because he had done good in Israel."

We may estimate the merits of Jehoiada's administration from the evil consequences that followed his death. It then appeared that the good qualities, which the king had seemed to manifest, were the effects rather of the right counsels under which he had acted, than of any solid principles of good. As we have before seen stronger and older men than Joash yielding to the witcheries of idolatry, which seem so strange to us, we are the less surprised at the fall of this king. It now appeared what deep root idolatry had taken in the land during the years of its predominance under Jehoram, Ahaziah, and Athaliah: and the men of station who had imbibed or had been brought up in its principles, now reared themselves on high, as soon as the repressive power of God's high-priest was withdrawn. They repaired to the royal court, and by their attentions and flatteries so won upon the king that he was at length induced to give first his tolerance, and then his sanction, to the rank idolatries by which the two kingdoms had often been brought very low. Against this, Zechariah, the son of the late high-priest and a near relation to the king, raised his voice, and predicted the national calamities which would too surely follow; on which the people rose upon him, and, having received a consenting intimation from the king, stoned him to death in the very court of the temple. Thus did Joash repay the deep obligations, for his life and throne, which he owed to the house of Jehoiada. "The Lord look upon it and require it!"* was the prayer of the dying martyr. And HE did require it. That very year, Hazael of Syria, who was then in possession of Gilead, advanced against Jerusalem, and although his force was but small, defeated a large army which opposed him, and entered the city, from which he returned with abundant plunder to his own country. The chiefs who had seduced Joash were slain in the battle; and the king himself, who had been grievously wounded, was soon after murdered by his own servants; and the public voice refused the honours of a royal burial to his remains. He reigned forty years.

Joash was succeeded on the throne by his son AMAZIAH, then twenty-five years of age. The first act of his reign was to punish the murderers of his father: but it is mentioned that he respected the law of Moses by not including their children in their doom; and this seems to show that a contrary practice had previously prevailed.

About the twelfth year of his reign, Amaziah took measures for reducing to their former subjection the Edomites, who had revolted in the time of Jehoram. Not satisfied with the strength he could raise in his own kingdom, the king of Judah hired a hundred thousand auxiliaries out of Israel for a hundred talents of silver.† But these were tainted with idolatry; on which

* May not one of the essential differences of the Jewish and Christian dispensations be illustrated by the last words of two men respectively eminent in each, and dying under very similar circumstances? "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge!" was the last cry of the dying Stephen.

† About 37,500*l*.



[Arab of Edom.]

account a prophet was commissioned to exhort Amaziah to forego their assistance, and dismiss them. By a memorable act of faith, the king at once yielded to this hard demand, and sent home the Israelites, for whose services he had already paid. He then gained a decisive victory over the Edomites in the Salt Valley, at the southern extremity of the Dead Sea. Ten thousand of the Edomites fell; and ten thousand more were cast down from the cliffs of their native mountains, and dashed in pieces.*

This victory was the ruin of Amaziah, whose conduct had been hitherto praiseworthy. The idols of Edom, which he brought home among the spoil, proved a snare to him; and, in the end he fell to the worship of "the gods who could not deliver their own people:" for which he was, without effect, upbraided by a prophet, and threatened with destructions from God.

The Israelites whom the king of Judah had dismissed from his army were filled with resentment at the indignity cast upon them; and probably disappointed in their hope of a share in the spoils of Edom. To testify their resentment, and to obtain compensation, they smote and plundered several of the towns of Judah, on their homeward march, and destroyed many of the inhabitants. It was probably on this account that Amaziah, elated by his victory over the Edomites, determined to make war upon Israel. It is singular that, instead of commencing, as usual, by some aggressive movement or overt act of warfare, Amaziah sent a formal challenge to the king of Israel, inviting a pitched battle, in the phrase, "Come, and let us look one another in the face." The truly Oriental answer of Joash seemed designed to dissuade him from this undertaking, but was conceived in terms not well calculated to accomplish the object: "A thistle that was in Lebanon, sent to the cedar of Lebanon, saying, 'Give thy daughter to my son to wife:' and a wild beast of Lebanon passed by, and trod down the thistle. Thou sayest, 'Lo! I have smitten the Edomites,' and thy heart is lifted up. Abide now at home: why shouldst thou meddle to thy hurt, so that thou shouldst fall, and Judah with thee?"

But Amaziah was not to be thus deterred. The two kings met in battle. Amaziah was defeated and taken prisoner, and his army routed at Beth-shemesh. Joash then pursued his triumphant march to Jerusalem, which he plundered, and spared not to lay his hands upon the sacred things of the Temple. He also broke down four hundred cubits of the city wall. He, however, restored Amaziah to his throne, but took hostages with him on his return to Samaria.

The life of Amaziah ended in a conspiracy, which may have been induced by the disgrace which he had brought upon the nation. This conspiracy was discovered by him, and he hastened to the fortified town of Lachish. But he was pursued and slain by the conspirators, who brought back his body "upon horses to Jerusalem," where a place in the sepulchres of his fathers was not denied him. He reigned twenty-nine years. B.C. 809.

Uzziah, otherwise called Azariah, was only five years old when his father was slain. The Judahites were in no haste to tender their allegiance to an infant. They waited until he was sixteen years of age, and he was then formally called to the throne.† Much favourable

* This was probably at or in the neighbourhood of Petra, of Mount Seir, of which see an engraving at the head of this chapter.

† "This naturally accounts for the length of the interregnum. (2 Kings xv. 1. 2; 2 Chron. xxvi. 1.) Amaziah was slain fifteen years current after the death of Jehovah, king of Israel (2 Kings xiv. 7), or fourteen years complete from the accession of Jeroboam II. his son; and Azariah, or Uzziah, did not begin to reign till the twenty-fifth of Jeroboam (according to the foregoing correction, instead of the twenty-seventh year), 2 Kings xv. i., which gives the length of the interregnum eleven years complete."—Hales.

influence upon the character of Uzziah is attributed to the early instruction and subsequent influence of the wise and holy Zechariah.* His adhesion to the principles of the theocracy secured him prosperity and honour. He paid equal attention to the arts of peace and of war; and he throve in all the undertakings, whether of war or peace, to which he put his hand. In the arts which belong to both, he encouraged and promoted various improvements; and it may be pardoned in an Oriental king, if, in his improvements and undertakings, his own interest and glory was the inciting motive. It is rare, and in fact difficult, for an Oriental monarch (considering the institutions by which he is surrounded, and the ideas which press upon him) to contemplate the interests of his people otherwise than as a contingent effect of undertakings in which *his own* interests and glory are the *primary* motives. So Uzziah performed the good deed of building towers and digging wells in the desert; but the reason immediately follows:—" *For* he had many cattle both in the valleys and in the plains." He also " loved husbandry ;" and, accordingly, " *he* had ground-tillers and vine-dressers in the mountains and in Carmel." These were laudable things; for the people could not but be benefited by them, even though their benefit were less the immediate intention than the indirect effect.

The same may even less doubtfully be said of this king's military organizations and improvements. New fortifications were built and the old repaired. At Jerusalem not only were the injuries which the walls had sustained repaired, but the gates and angles were strengthened with towers; and on these were mounted engines invented by skilful men, and made under the king's encouragement and direction, for the purpose of discharging arrows and great stones. It may be doubtful whether these engines were invented by Hebrew engineers, or successfully copied by them from foreigners. We have certainly no opinion that the Hebrews had much genius for mechanical invention; but we are bound to say the antiquities of Egypt, in the numerous warlike scenes which they represent, do not, as far as we know, contain any examples of projectile engines: and it must be admitted that *in the art of war* many ingenious devices originate with nations not otherwise distinguished for their inventive faculties.

Uzziah provided ample stores of weapons and armour—spears, shields, helmets, breastplates, bows, and stone-slings—for the numerous body which he enrolled as ready to be called into action, and which consisted of not less than 307,500 men under 2600 paternal chiefs. This formed a sort of militia, divided into bands, liable to be called into actual service by rotation, according to the number required.

With this force, and under these arrangements, Uzziah was enabled to establish and extend his power. He recovered possession of the port of Elath on the Red Sea; he got possession of the principal Philistine towns, Gath, Jabneh, and Ashdod. The Arab hordes on the borders were subdued; and the Ammonites were reduced to tribute.

Elated by all this prosperity, the king of Judah saw not why he should be precluded from a distinction which other monarchs enjoyed, and which his neighbour of Israel probably exercised—that of officiating on particular occasions at the incense-altar, as high-priest. He made the attempt. He went into the holy place, which none but the priests might lawfully enter, to offer incense on the altar there; but was followed by the high-priest, Azariah, and by eighty other priests, who opposed his design, and warned him of his trespass. The king, made wrathful by this opposition, seized the censer to offer incense; but in that moment he was smitten with leprosy, the marks of which appeared visibly on his forehead. On perceiving this, the priests thrust him forth as a pollution; nay, confounded and conscience-smitten, he hastened to leave the place.† From that day he was obliged to live apart as a leper, and his

* No one will, of course, confound this person with the prophet of the same name, who lived long after. It is not, in fact, *known* who he was. Some conjecture that he was the son of the Zechariah who was slain in the time of Joash. But we know of no other foundation for this but the name. The distance of *time* does not favour the conjecture which identifies him with the Zechariah of Isaiah viii. 2.

† To this prodigy Josephus adds an earthquake, which, he says, shook the earth with such violence that the roof of the temple was rent; and one half of a mountain on the west of Jerusalem fell, or rather slipped, into the valley below, covering the royal gardens.

son Jotham administered the affairs of the government in his father's name. The year in which this happened is not well determined; but the whole duration of his reign was fifty-two years. This is the longest reign of any king of Judah, with the sole exception of Manasseh. Isaiah received his appointment to the prophetic office in the year that king Uzziah died [B.C. 757]; and Amos, Hoshea, and probably Joel, began to prophecy in his reign.

The death of Uzziah left the kingdom under the same actual ruler, but exchanged his regency for the sovereignty. Jotham was twenty-five years old when he began to reign. He was a good and prosperous prince, and during the sixteen years of his separate reign continued the improvements and plans of his father. He built several fortresses, and confirmed the subjection of the Ammonites to his sceptre. It was in this reign* that the city of Rome was founded, with the destinies of which the Hebrews were in the end to be so intimately connected. Jotham died in the year B.C. 741.

Ahaz succeeded Jotham when he was twenty years of age. He proved the most corrupt monarch that the house of David had as yet produced. He respected neither Jehovah, the law, nor the prophets; he broke through all the salutary restraints which law and usage imposed upon the Hebrew kings, and regarded nothing but his own depraved inclinations. He introduced the Syrian idolatry into Jerusalem, erected altars to the Syrian gods, altered the temple in many respects, according to the Syrian model, and finally caused it to be entirely shut up. For these things, adversities and punishments came soon upon him.

Pekah king of Israel, and Rezin king of Syria, had formed an alliance against Judah in the last year of Jotham, which began to take effect as soon as Ahaz had evinced the unworthiness of his character. The object of this alliance appears to have been no less than to dethrone the house of David, and to make "the son of Tabeal" king in the room of Ahaz.†

In this war Elath was taken from Judah by the king of Syria, who restored it to the Edomites. He also defeated Ahaz in battle and carried away large numbers of his subjects as captives to Damascus. Pekah on his part was equally successful. He slew in one day 120,000 men of Judah, and carried away captives not fewer than 200,000 women and children, together with much spoil, to Samaria. But on his arrival there he was met by the prophet Obed, and by some of the chiefs of Ephraim. The former awakened the king's apprehensions for the consequences of the Divine anger on account of the evil already committed against the house of Judah, and exhorted him not to add to this evil and to their danger, by reducing the women and children of that kindred state to bondage. The prophet was vigorously seconded by the chiefs, who positively declared to the troops, "ye *shall not* bring in hither these captives to increase our guilt before Jehovah. Intend ye to add to our sin and to our trespass? for our trespass is great, and fierce is the wrath of Jehovah against Israel." On hearing this the warriors abandoned their captives, and left them in the hands of the chiefs, who, with the concurrence and help of the people, "took the captives, and from the spoil clothed all that were naked among them, and arrayed them, and shod them, and gave them to eat and drink, and anointed them, and carried all the feeble of them upon asses, and brought them to Jericho, the city of palm-trees, to their brethren." This beautiful incident comes over our sense as might some strain of soft and happy music amidst the bray of trumpets and the alarms of war. It also proves that, even in the worst of times, a righteous few were found, even in Israel, who honoured the God of their fathers and stood in dread of his judgments.

The narrative in Isaiah records an unsuccessful attempt of the confederates against Jerusalem, the proper place of which in the history is not easily found, but which may appear to have been posterior to the occurrences which have been related. At the same time, the Edomites and Philistines invaded the south of Judah, and took possession of several cities of the low country, with their villages, and occupied them. Thus harassed on every hand, the besotted king rejected a token of deliverance which Isaiah was commissioned to offer him

* B.C. 748, or according to others, 750 or 752, all which dates fell in this reign.

† Isa. vii. 5. 6. Of this "son of Tabeal" nothing is known, although much has been conjectured. Some make it to be Pekah himself, but the interpretation on which it is founded is not very sound, although the thing itself might not be unlikely.

from God, under the pretext that he " would not tempt Jehovah," but in reality, because he had already chosen another alternative. This was to induce Tiglath-Pileser,* the king of Assyria, to make a diversion in his favour by invading the kingdoms of Syria and Israel.

Pul, the father of this king, was the first Assyrian monarch who took part in the affairs of the West. By invading Israel, he had made known the power of that monarchy to Syria and Palestine. Tiglath-Pileser, for his own objects, lent a willing ear to the suite of Ahaz, who professed himself his vassal, and sent him a subsidy of all the sacred and royal treasures. He marched an army westward, defeated and slew Rezin the king of Syria, took Damascus, and sent the inhabitants away into Assyria,—thus putting an end to that monarchy of Damascene-Syria, which has so often come under our notice. At the same time he carried away the tribes beyond Jordan—Reuben, Gad, and half Manasseh—captives to Media, where they were planted in Halah, Habor, and on the river Gozan ; and to them he added the other half of the tribe of Manasseh which was seated in Galilee.

Syria, with the countries of Gilead and Bashan, were thus annexed to the dominions of the Assyrian king, who remained some time at Damascus, settling his conquests. Ahaz had small cause to rejoice in this alteration, for although he was delivered from his immediate fears, the formidable Assyrian had now become his near neighbour, and was not likely to treat him with much consideration; and in fact the result was that " he distressed Ahaz, and strengthened him not." The king of Judah, however, found it prudent to visit Tiglath-Pileser at Damascus, to congratulate him on his victories, and to tender his homage. This visit only taught him new fashions of idolatry and sin ; which on his return home he continued to practice apparently until his death, which took place in B.C. 725, after a disgraceful reign of sixteen years. He was allowed a grave in Jerusalem ; but no place in the sepulchre of the kings was granted to him.

CONTEMPORARY KINGS.

KINGS OF JUDAH.		KINGS OF ISRAEL.	
Q. Athaliah	B.C. 895	Jehu	B.C. 895
Joash or Jehoash	889	Jehoahaz	867
Amaziah	849	Jehoash or Joash	850
Interregnum	820	Jeroboam II.	834
Uzziah or Azariah	809	——	——
——	——	First Interregnum	793
——	——	Zachariah and Shallum	771
——	——	Menahem	770
——	——	Pekahiah	760
Jotham	757	Pekah	758
Ahaz	741	——	——
——	——	Second Interregnum	738
		Hoshea	728
Died	725	Samaria taken	719

* Or *Tiglath pul-assur,* " the tiger lord of Assyria."

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE.

([1]) "High Places," p. 586.—The few remarks we have to offer on this subject may be regarded as supplementary to the statements given in previous pages respecting what are called Druidical monuments. Indeed our previous inquiries greatly simplify the present question. The interpretation of the "high places" which our previous conclusions suggest, is precisely that which the frequent mention of these "high-places" in the Scriptures would spontaneously suggest to any reader. And this is that they were such rude altars as have already been described erected on conspicuous spots, often on the tops of natural hills or artificial mounds. That altars or other sacred stones marked these high places, is obvious from the phrases expressing erection or setting up. Taken in this more limited signification, there are existing remains of such erections in different quarters. In the 'Monumentarum Danicorum' of Olaus Wormius, we see, at p. 8, a sacred hill crowned by a *cromlech*, below which a circle of stones runs round the hill, which itself stands within a square of Druidical stones. In another place (p. 35) a similar hill, similarly enclosed, has two circles of stones, one around the base, and the other about one-third below the summit. Our Aggle-Stone (of which a figure is given below), in the isle of Purbeck, may be regarded as a remarkable monument of this class.

We incline to think, however, that the term, as applied in Scripture, might denote any place of a sacred stone or stones to which people congregated for worship, whether containing an altar for sacrifice or not, and whether upon a hill or not; and they may have taken the name of "high places," from their having been, originally, most commonly upon hills: or it is not unlikely that they may have been so called from their own height of structure, independently of situation; and even their being places of worship and sacrifice, might entitle them to the denomination of high or eminent places, without reference to either of these circumstances.

It is clear that "high places" were not always, nor in later times generally, in elevated spots. When men ranged the world and had no certain dwelling place, the preference of an elevation for their altars was easier than when settled habitations were established in plains, and with reference to other contingencies, than the presence of a mountain or a hill. This may be proved from Scripture. In some passages the "high places" are *distinguished from hills*.* Sometimes high places were made "*in every city*,"† many of which had no eminence in or near them. Accordingly they are described as being *in streets*.‡ This last text, with various others, also shows that the high places were of rude stone or artificial materials, capable of being destroyed by violence, for it is threatened to *break them down*.§ This also appears with reference to those that were really on eminences.‖

In the same passage high places are described in valleys and by the side of rivers. Of Jeroboam, it is even said that "he made a *house of high places*."¶ We also read of high places that were not *removed* or *taken away* by Asa,** by Jehoshaphat,†† or by Jehoash.‡‡ They were taken away by Hezekiah; but were *built up* again by Manasseh.§§ Josiah "*brake down* the high places of the gate,"‖‖ as well as those that were *in the cities* of Samaria,¶¶ "the name of which we had been previously told that the children of Israel "*built* them high places in all their cities."***

From these and other instances, we conclude that there were places in various situations, consecrated to religious worship and generally to altar-service; and that this appropriation was marked by such altars and monuments of stone as still remain in various quarters.

The Israelites were commanded to destroy the high places which had been consecrated to idols, as abominable things; while the principle of but one place of altar-service, precluded the use of high places in the service of Jehovah. It appears, however, that this preclusion of high places in the service of God was not rigidly enforced until after the building of the temple: and although, after that, the offering of sacrifices and oblations at high places is noticed with reprehension, it is not clear that they were not even then allowed as places of

* *E. g.* 2 Kings xvi. 4.
† 2 Chron. xxviii. 24.
‡ Ezek. xvi. 31—39.
§ See also Lev. xxvi. 30; Num. xxxiii. 52.
‖ Ezek. vi. 3.
¶ 1 Kings xii. 31, 32.
** 2 Chron, xv. 17.
†† 1 Kings xxii. 23.
‡‡ 2 Kings xii. 3.
§§ 2 Kings xxi. 3.
‖‖ 2 Kings xxiii. 8.
¶¶ 2 Kings xxiii. 19.
*** 2 Kings xvii. 9. 11.

resort for public worship and instruction—bearing the same relation to the Temple as did the synagogues of after times, in which there were no offerings or sacrifices, nor any ritual service. The sentiment of the Jews in this matter is, that even sacrifice at the high places, when the *intention* was above suspicion, was lawful prior to the Temple: and, certainly, before then such acts were performed by men whose intentions were unquestionably right, and the high places themselves are described rather with approbation than reproach.* The habit of this was so rooted that even the best kings found it difficult to interfere with it, after a stricter rule had been established on the erection of the temple. It is often mentioned with blame that the people, in the best times, continued to offer sacrifice and burn incense at the high places, to which (as we understand) they lawfully resorted, in their several districts, on the Sabbaths and other occasions for worship. That there should be such places of resort, at which services might be rendered similar to those which afterwards distinguished the synagogues, is not only probable, and almost necessary in itself, but appears to be indicated in some passages:* and it would be difficult to show what these were but the high places, at which it was so difficult to wean the people from rendering those further and higher services of sacrifice and oblation, which should have been peculiar to the Temple and the altar there. It is quite unlikely that they had other places of religious resort than those at which they were so much disposed to render higher services than the law allowed.

* 1 Sam ix. 12, 19, 25; x. 5; 1 Kings iii. 4. &c.

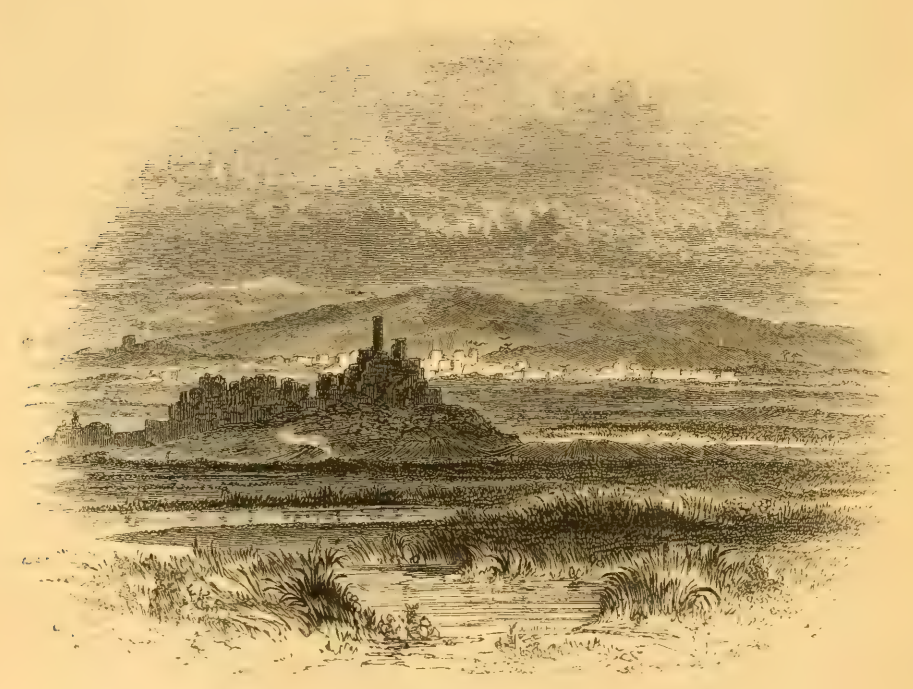
* Psalm xxvii. 12; lxviii. 26; Isa. vii. 19.



[The Aggle-Stone.]

CHAPTER VIII.

ISRAEL, FROM 895 B.C., TO 719 B.C.



[Nineveh.]

Jehu, having executed his avenging mission upon the house of Ahab, and overthrown the idolatries of Baal, ascended the throne of Israel in the year 895 B.C.

There was a point beyond which Jehu was not prepared to go in his boasted zeal for Jehovah. He was ready to punish and discountenance all foreign worship ; but it was no part of his policy to heal the schism between Judah and Israel, by abolishing the separate and highly irregular establishment, for the worship of Jehovah, before the symbolic golden calves, which Jeroboam had established, and which all his successors had maintained. The vital root therefore remained in the ground, although the branches had been lopped off. It also appeared, ere long, that the foreign idolatries of Ahab and Jezebel had acquired too much prevalence to be entirely extirpated by any coercive reformation. As soon as the heat of that reformation had cooled, such idolatries again gradually stole into use, although no longer with the sanction or favour of the government.

For these things the kingdom of Israel was in the latter days of Jehu allowed to be shorn of the provinces beyond Jordan. That fair country was ravaged, and its fortresses seized by Hazael, king of Syria, who, without any recorded opposition from the king of Israel, appears to have annexed it to his own dominions.

Jehu died in 867 B.C., after a reign of twenty-eight years.

He was succeeded by his son Jehoahaz, who reigned seventeen inglorious years. He followed the latter course of his father, and the people followed their own course. The same kind of punishment was therefore continued. The Syrians were still permitted to prevail over Israel, until, at length, Jehoahaz had only left, of all his forces, ten chariots, fifty horsemen, and ten thousand infantry; for "the king of Syria had destroyed the rest, and trampled on them like dust." By these calamities the king was at last awakened to a sense of his position and his danger: he made supplication to Jehovah with tears; and therefore his latter days were favoured with peace. He died in 850 B.C.

JOASH, his son, began to reign in the thirty-seventh year of his namesake, Joash king of Judah. Josephus gives this king a good character, which the sacred historian does not confirm. From looking at the few incidents of his life which it has been deemed worth while to preserve, we may reconcile these statements by discovering that he was in his private character a well-disposed, although weak, man; while as a king he made no efforts to discourage idolatry or heal the schism which the establishment of the golden calves had produced. In his days Elisha the prophet fell sick of that illness of which he died. When the king heard of his danger, he went to visit his dying bed, and wept over him, crying, "O my father! my father!—the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof!" As the idolatrous generation was now becoming extinct, and the good dispositions of Joash himself were recognised, the dying prophet was enabled to assure him, by a significant symbol, of three victories over the Syrians. Accordingly, Joash was enabled to keep them in check, and in the end to gain the ascendancy over them, so as to recover from Ben-hadad the possessions of which his own father had been deprived by the father of that Syrian king.

Joash reigned seventeen years.

In the year 834 B.C., JEROBOAM II. succeeded his father, whom he appears to have much resembled in character and proceedings. He began badly; and Josephus says that he engaged in various absurd foreign undertakings which proved very injurious to the nation. He was probably improved by ripening years; for the prophet Jonah was commissioned to promise him the complete recovery of the former dominions of the state. A great victory over the Syrians accordingly restored to him all the ancient divisions of Israel, from Hamath to the borders of the Dead Sea. His signal success over Amaziah the king of Judah has been recorded in the preceding chapter. Upon the whole, the reign of Jeroboam II. may be regarded as a brilliant one, considering the evil days on which the history has now fallen. In fact, it would not be easy to point to any king of the separate kingdom of Israel whose reign was more prosperous.

The prophet Jonah, named in the preceding paragraph, is the same whose reluctant mission to Nineveh,* the capital of the Assyrian empire, is related in the book which bears his name. "The king of Nineveh," whose humiliation with that of his people averted the doom impending over "that exceeding great city," is supposed to have been the predecessor of Pul, whom the history will speedily bring before us. Jonah's remarkable mission appears to have taken place about the year 800 B.C., at the latter end of the reign of Jeroboam, who died in 793 B.C., after a reign of forty-one years.

There was a delay in calling his son ZECHARIAH to the throne. Jeroboam II. began to reign in the fifteenth year of Amaziah king of Judah, and reigned forty-one years;† he died, therefore, in the sixteenth year of Uzziah king of Judah; but his son Zechariah did not succeed him until the thirty-eighth of Uzziah,‡ which produces an interregnum of not less than twenty-two years. During this period great internal commotions prevailed, which more than compensated the absence of foreign war. Kings were suddenly raised to the throne, and as suddenly removed, agreeably to the representation which the prophet Hoshea gives of the state of the kingdom. The same representation also proves that at this period very gross corruptions of religion and of morals prevailed. Even the ultimate call of Zechariah to the throne

* See the cut at the head of this chapter. † 2 Kings xiv. 43. ‡ 2 Kings xv. 8.

had scarcely any effect in allaying these disturbances, and he was himself slain by Shallum in the sixth month of his reign. He was the last king of the house of Jehu: and thus was fulfilled the prediction that the family of Jehu should only retain the throne to the fourth generation.

Shallum, whose deed in slaying Zechariah was performed with the sanction and in the presence of the people, ascended the vacant throne in the year 771 b.c. But on receiving intelligence of this event, Menahem, the general of the army, marched against the new king, and having defeated and slain him in battle, after a reign of but thirty days, mounted the throne himself: and through his influence with the army, he was enabled not only to retain his post, but to subdue the disturbances by which the country had of late years been distracted. In doing this he proceeded with a degree of barbarity which would have been scarcely excusable in even a foreign conqueror.*

It was in the time of Menahem that the Assyrians under Pul made their first appearance in Syria. Their formidable force precluded even the show of opposition from the king of Israel, who deemed it the wiser course to purchase peace from the Assyrian king at the price of a thousand talents of silver.† This sum he raised by the unpopular measure of a poll tax of fifty shekels each ‡ upon 60,000 of his wealthiest subjects. This is the first instance in either kingdom of money raised by taxation for a public object. In the kingdom of Judah such exigencies were met from the treasury of the temple, or of the crown; and probably there were, in ordinary times, analogous resources in Israel, but which we may readily conclude to have been exhausted in the recent troubles and confusions in that kingdom. Professor Jahn considers that the government of Israel had by this time become wholly military, in which conclusion we are disposed to acquiesce, although from other intimations than those to which he adverts.

After a reign of ten years Menahem died in 760 b.c., and was succeeded by his son Pekahiah, who after a short and undistinguished reign of two years, was slain by Pekah, the commander of the forces, who placed himself on the throne.

The alliance of Pekah with Rezin the king of Syria, against the house of David, has been recorded in the preceding chapter, as well as the consequences which resulted from the resort of Ahaz king of Judah to the protection of Tiglath-pileser, the new king of Assyria, who overran Gilead and Galilee, and removed the inhabitants to Assyria and Media. After a reign of twenty years, Pekah received from Hoshea the same doom which he had himself inflicted upon his predecessor. This was in 738 b.c., being in the third year of the reign of Ahaz in Judah.

It appears that although Hoshea is counted as the next king, he was not immediately able to establish himself on the throne, but that an interregnum, or period of anarchy, of ten years' duration, followed the murder of Pekah.§ Thus, although the kingdom of Israel was now enclosed within very narrow boundaries, and surrounded on the north and east by the powerful Assyrians, it could not remain quiet, but was continually exhausting its strength in domestic conspiracies and broils.

From this struggle the regicide Hoshea emerged as king. He proved a better ruler than most of his predecessors. He allowed the king of Judah (Hezekiah) to send messengers through the country inviting the people to a great passover which he intended to celebrate at Jerusalem, nor did he throw any obstacles in the way of the persons disposed to accept the invitation. He had a spirit which might have enabled him to advance the power and interests of the country under ordinary circumstances; but now, doomed of God, the kingdom was too much weakened to make the least effort against the Assyrian power. When therefore Shalmaneser, the new Assyrian king, invaded the country, he bowed his neck to receive the yoke

* Joseph. Antiq. ix. 11, § 1.

† Almost 375,000*l.* by the present value of this quantity of silver.

‡ Six pounds five shillings sterling.

§ "Pekah king of Israel, began to reign in the fifty-second year of Uzziah (2 Kings xv. 27; 2 Chron. xxvi. 3); and in the twentieth year of his reign was slain by Hoshea (xv. 30) in the third year of the reign of Ahaz king of Judah (2 Kings xvi. 1); but Hoshea did not begin to reign until the twelfth year of Ahaz (xvii. 1), or the thirteenth current (2 Kings xvi. 10); consequently the second interregnum in Israel lasted 13 – 3 = 10 years."—Hales.

of a tributary. This yoke, however, he found so galling that ere long he took measures for shaking it off. He made a treaty with "So," or Sabaco* king of Egypt, and on the strength of it ventured to seize and imprison the Assyrian officer appointed to collect the tribute. Upon this, Shalmaneser laid siege to Samaria, and after three years gained possession of that city and destroyed it. During all this time the king of Egypt made no attempt to come to the assistance of Israel, as Isaiah had from the beginning predicted, in language of strong reprehension against this alliance.† The fall of Samaria consummated the conquest of the country by the Assyrians. Hoshea was himself among the captives, and was sent in chains to Nineveh; but what afterwards became of him is not known. Considerable numbers of the principal Israelites, during the war, and at its disastrous conclusion, fled the country, some to Egypt, but more into Judea, where they settled down as subjects of Hezekiah, whose kingdom must have been considerably strengthened by this means.

According to a piece of Oriental policy of which modern examples have been offered, Shalmaneser removed from the land the principal inhabitants, the soldiers, and the artisans to Halab, to the river Habor (Chebar in Ezekiel), to Gozan, and to the cities of the Medes. On the other hand, colonists were brought from Babylon, Cuthah, Ava, Hamath, and Sepharvaim, and seated in Samaria. It appears also that other colonists were afterwards sent into the country by Esarhaddon.‡ These people mingled with the Israelites, who still abode in the land, and were all comprehended under the general name of SAMARITANS, which was derived from the city of Samaria. At first all of them were worshippers of idols; but as wild beasts increased in their depopulated country, they were much disturbed by lions. According to the notions respecting national and local gods which then prevailed in the world, it is not strange that they attributed this calamity to the anger of the god of the country on account of their neglect of his worship. Accordingly, an Israelitish priest was recalled from exile, in order to instruct these idolaters in the worship of Jehovah as a national Deity. He settled at Bethel, where one of the golden calves had formerly stood; and afterwards the Samaritans united the worship of Jehovah with the worship of their own gods.

We will follow the expatriated Israelites into the places of their captivity; but first it is necessary that our attention should be turned to the affairs of Judah, which the mercy and long-suffering of God still continues to spare.

* This So, or Sabaco of profane authors,—Sabakoph on the monuments,—was an Ethiopian who ruled in Egypt, and whose right to the crown of which may have been (in part, at least) derived from marriage, although Herodotus represents him solely as an intrusive conqueror. His name occurs at Abydus; and the respect paid to his monuments by his successors may be considered to imply that his reign was not a wrongful usurpation.

† Isaiah xxx. 1—7.

‡ Ezra iv. 2; comp. 9, 10.

CHAPTER IX.

JUDAH, FROM 725 B C, TO 586 B C.



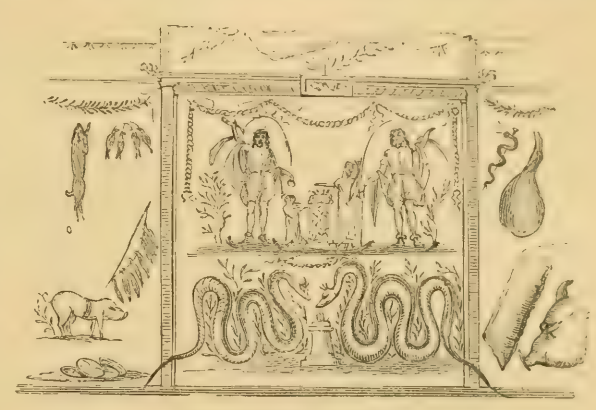
[Sepulchre of the Kings.]

HEZEKIAH was twenty-five years of age when he succeeded his father Ahaz, in the kingdom of Judah. He was a most pious prince, and thoroughly imbued with the principles of the theocracy. He testified the most lively zeal for the service and honour of Jehovah; while, as a king, he was disposed to manifest the most unreserved reliance on Him and subservience to Him, as Sovereign Lord of the Hebrew people. He therefore won the high eulogium that "there was none like him among all the kings of Judah after him, nor any that were before him."*

He began his reign by the restoration of the true religion and the abolishment of idolatry

* 2 Kings xviii. 1—5. Such, however, must be understood as popular forms of describing superior character; for the same is said, in the same terms, of his own great-grandson, Josiah.

throughout his dominions. In the very first month he opened the doors of the temple, which his father had closed, and restored the worship and service of God in proper order and beauty. In extirpating idolatry he was not content, with the abolition of its grosser forms, but sought out the more *native* and intimate superstitions which were incentives thereto. The altars illegally erected to Jehovah, which former kings had spared, were by him overthrown. The brazen serpent, which Moses had made in the wilderness, and which was preserved in the temple, came in time to be regarded as a holy relic, to which at last a sort of superstitious worship was paid, and incense burned before it. This was not unnatural, considering the history of this relic, combined with the fact that ophiolatry was then, and before and after, a very common superstition in Egypt and other countries. The cut at p. 583 gives an illustration of this fact; and another may be given in the one now annexed.* It nobly illustrates the vigour of Hezekiah's character, and of an entire freedom from superstition, of which it is difficult *now* to appreciate the full merit, that he spared not even this certainly interesting relic, but broke it in pieces, and instead of *nahash*, "a serpent," called it contemptuously *nehushtan*, "a brazen bauble."



[Serpent Worship. Pompeii.]

Much attention was also paid by Hezekiah to the dignified and orderly celebration of the festivals, which formed so conspicuous a feature in the ritual system of the Hebrews The passover in particular, which had fallen into neglect, was revived with great splendour, and, as noticed in the last chapter, Hezekiah sent couriers through the kingdom of Israel to invite the attendance of the Israelites. His object was so obviously religious only, without any political motives, that the last king of Israel offered no opposition: and indeed a kingdom so nearly on the point of being absorbed into the great Assyrian empire, had small occasion to concern itself respecting any possible designs of Hezekiah. The Israelites were therefore left to act as their own dispositions might determine. The couriers went on from city to city proclaiming the message, and delivering the letters with which they were charged. In these the king of Judah manifested great anxiety to induce the Israelites—"the remnant who had escaped out of the hands of the kings of Assyria"†—to return to Jehovah, and by that return avert that utter destruction which seemed to impend over them. The great body of the Israelites received the invitation with laughter and derision; but in Zebulon and Asher some were found "who humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem."

Like David, his great model, Hezekiah made provision for the instruction and moral improvement of the people, by the public singing of the Psalms in the temple, and by a new collection of the moral maxims of Solomon.

For his righteous doings the Lord was with Hezekiah, and prospered him in all his reason-

* This cut is one of many similar representations at Pompeii, in which the *Lares*, or household gods, are represented in the form of serpents brooding over an altar. The present example is from a painting in the kitchen of a first-rate house at Pompeii. The upper part exhibits a sacrifice in honour of those deities, who are represented below, and whose protection and custody over the provisions and cooking utensils is indicated by the bordering appendages.

† Some have inferred from this that this was *after* the captivity of Israel. But *that* did not take place until the sixth year of Hezekiah; and it is not likely that one who began his reforms with so much promptitude and vigour, deferred the passover until *after* six years. Besides, the kingdom of Israel after the losses of Pekah to the Assyrians, was but "a remnant" of what it had been.

able undertakings. He extended the fortifications and magazines throughout the country; he supplied Jerusalem more plentifully with water by means of a new aqueduct; and the Philistines, who had penetrated into the southern parts of Judea in the reign of his father, were conquered by his arms.

The possession of the kingdom of Damascene-Syria, and the entire conquest of Israel, rendered the kings of Assyria all-powerful in those countries. Phœnicia was the next to experience the force of their arms. The Tyrians only (according to the citation which Josephus adduces from their own historian Menander) refused to receive the Assyrian yoke. They fought and dispersed the fleet which the subjugated Phœnicians had furnished for the ulterior objects and remoter enterprises of Shalmaneser. To avenge this act, the Assyrian king left his troops for five years in the Tyrian territory, where they grievously distressed the citizens of Tyre, by cutting off all access to the river and aqueduct from which the town obtained its water. It was the death of Shalmaneser, apparently, which induced the Assyrians to abandon the siege.

It was probably the same occasion, together with an undue reliance upon his fortifications, and too much confidence derived from the success which had attended the small wars in which he had been engaged, which led Hezekiah into the same temerity which had been the ruin of Hoshea. He discontinued the tribute to the Assyrians which had been imposed upon his father, and by that act threw off the yoke which Ahaz had voluntarily taken on himself.

In the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, the new king of Assyria, named Sennacherib, came a large army to reduce the kingdom of Judah to obedience, as well as to invade Egypt, on account of the encouragement which "So," the king of that country, had given to Hoshea to revolt, by promises of assistance, which he proved unable to render. Such promises appear to have been renewed to Hezekiah, to induce him to give trouble and employment to a power of which the Egyptians had good cause to be jealous. But the new king Sethos [Se-pthah, priest of Pthah], who had been a priest, considering the services of the soldiers unnecessary to the security of a kingdom entrusted to the protection of the gods, treated the military caste with much indignity, and much abridged their privileges, in consequence of which they refused, when required, to march against the Assyrians.

Hezekiah, disappointed of the assistance which he had expected from Egypt,* and observing the overwhelming nature of the force put in action, delayed not to make his submissions to Sennacherib, humbly acknowledging his offence, and offering to submit to any tribute which the king might impose upon him. The desire of the Assyrian not to delay his more important operations against Egypt, seems to have inclined him to listen favourably to this overture. He demanded three hundred talents of silver, and thirty talents of gold; and this was paid by Hezekiah, although to raise it he was compelled to exhaust the royal and sacred treasures, and even to strip off the gold with which the doors and pillars of the temple were overlaid.

Sennacherib received the silver and gold; but after he had taken Ashdod, one of the keys of Egypt, he began to think it would be unsafe in his invasion of that country to leave the kingdom of Judah unsubdued in his rear. He therefore determined to complete the subjugation of Judah in the first place,—the rather as his recent observations, and the humble submission of Hezekiah, left him little reason to expect much delay or difficulty in this enterprise. He soon reduced all the cities to his power except Libnah and Lachish, to which he laid siege, and Jerusalem, to which he sent his general Rabshakeh with a very haughty summons to surrender. Many blasphemous and disparaging expressions were applied to Jehovah by the heathen general. By this He was, as it were, bound to vindicate his own honour and power; and, accordingly, the prophet Isaiah was commissioned to promise the king deliverance, and to foretell the destruction of the Assyrian host: "Lo! I will send *a*

* That he had expectations from that quarter, and that such expectations were known to the Syrians, appears from Rabshakeh's advice to him,—"Not to trust upon the staff of that bruised reed, Egypt (upon which if a man lean it will break and pierce his hand);" 2 Kings xviii. 17—35.

blast upon him, and he shall hear *a rumour*, and shall return to his own land, and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land."*

The *rumour* by which Sennacherib was alarmed and interrupted, was no other than the report which was spread abroad that Tirhakah the Ethiopian, king of Upper Egypt,† was marching with an immense army to cut off his retreat. He then determined to withdraw; but first sent a boasting letter to Hezekiah, defying the God of Israel, and threatening what destructions he would execute upon the nation on his return. But that very night an immense proportion of the Assyrian host—even one hundred and eighty thousand men—were struck dead by "the BLAST" which the prophet had predicted, and which has, with great probability, been ascribed to the agency of the *Simoom*, or hot pestilential south wind, which we have had another occasion to notice.‡



[Tirhakah. Rosellini.]

Sennacherib returned to Nineveh, and in the exasperation of defeat he behaved with great severity to the captive Israelites. But his career was soon closed. Fifty-two days after his return he was slain, while worshipping in the temple of the god Nisroc, by his two eldest sons. Thus the prophecy of Isaiah was in every point accomplished. The parricides fled into Armenia, leaving the steps of the throne clear for the ascent of the third son, whose name was Esarhaddon. This great blow so weakened the Assyrian monarchy as not only to free the king of Judah from his apprehensions, but enabled the Medes and Babylonians to assert their independence.

The same year Hezekiah fell sick—apparently of the plague,—and he was warned by the prophet Isaiah to prepare for death. The king was afflicted at these tidings; and turning his face to the wall (as he lay in his bed), to be unnoticed by his attendants, he besought the Lord, with tears, to remember him with favour. His prayer was heard; and the prophet, who had not yet left the palace, was charged to return and acquaint Hezekiah, that on the third following day he should resume his customary attendance at the Temple; and not only that, but that fifteen years should be added to his life. In confirmation of this extraordinary communication, the king desired some miraculous sign; and accordingly the shadow of the style upon the dial of Ahaz went backward ten degrees. The event corresponded to these intimations. The prolongation of life was the more important and desirable to Hezekiah, as at that time there was no direct heir to the crown. These circumstances, together with the signal deliverance from Sennacherib, not only cured the people of the idolatry which Ahaz had introduced, and retained them for some time in their fidelity to Jehovah, but excited the curiosity and admiration of the neighbouring nations. Merodach-Baladan, the king of

* 2 Kings xix. 7.

† "With Tirhakah we are acquainted, both from sacred and profane records; and his successful opposition to the power of Assyria is noticed in the Bible (2 Kings xix. 19; Isa. xxxvii. 9), may be traced in Herodotus (ii. 141), and *is recorded on the walls of a Theban temple.* It is possible that in the early part of his reign Sethos (or "So") divided the kingdom with him, and ruled in Lower Egypt, while the Ethiopian monarch possessed the dominion of the upper country; and this would account for the absence of the name of Sethos on the monuments of Thebes. Whether Tirhakah and Sabaco's claims to the throne of Egypt were derived from any right acquired by intermarriage with the royal family of that country, and whether the dominion was at first confined to the Thebaïd it is difficult to determine: but the respect paid by their successors to the monuments they erected, argues the probability of their having succeeded to the throne by right, rather than by usurpation or the force of arms."—Wilkinson, i. 140. It should be added that at Medinet Abou are the figure and name of Tirhakah, and of the captives he took. The figure is that which we have given from Rosellini. It will be observed that he wears the crown of Upper Egypt, and that only. The name of Sabaco (Sethos, or So) is found at Abydus.

‡ See the Physical History, p. cxliii.

Babylon, sent an embassy to congratulate the king on his deliverance from the Assyrians (through which Merodach himself had been enabled to establish his independence in Babylon), and upon his recovery from his illness, as well as to make particular inquiries respecting the miracle by which it was accompanied—and which must have been of peculiar interest to a scientific people like the Babylonians. Hezekiah appears to have been highly flattered by this embassy from so distant a quarter. The ambassadors were treated with much attention and respect, and the king himself took pleasure in showing them the curiosities and treasures of his kingdom. That he had treasures to show, seems to signify that he had recovered his wealth from the Assyrians, or had enriched himself by their spoil.

The sacred historian attributes Hezekiah's conduct on this occasion to " his pride of heart," involving an appropriation to himself of that glory which belonged only to Jehovah. Although, therefore, his conduct did not occasion the doom, it gave the prophet Isaiah occasion to make known to him that the treasures of his kingdom were the destined spoil, and his posterity the destined captives of the very nation whose present ambassage had produced in him so much unseemly pride. This was in every way a most remarkable prediction; for Babylon was then an inconsiderable kingdom, and the people almost unknown by whom the prediction was to be fulfilled. Hezekiah received this announcement with true Oriental submission—satisfied, he said, if there were but peace and truth in his own days.

The remainder of Hezekiah's reign—through the years of prolonged life which had been granted to him—appears to have been prosperous and happy. To no other man was it ever granted to view the approach of death with certain knowledge, through the long but constantly shortening vista of years that lay before him. At the time long before appointed, Hezekiah died, after a reign of twenty-nine years, B.C. 725.

Manasseh was but twelve years of age when he lost his father, and began to reign. The temptations which surrounded him, and the evil counsels which were pressed upon him, were too strong for his youth. He was corrupted; and it seemed the special object of his reign to overthrow all the good his father had wrought in Judah. The crimes of all former kings seem light in comparison with those which disgraced his reign. He upheld idolatry with all the influence of the regal power, and that with such inconceivable boldness, that the pure and holy ceremonies of the temple service were superseded by obscene rites of an idol image set up in the very sanctuary; while the courts of God's House were occupied by altars to " the host of heaven," or, the heavenly bodies. He maintained herds of necromancers, astrologers, and soothsayers of various kinds. The practice which was, of all others, the most abhorrent to Jehovah, the king sanctioned by his own atrocious example, for he devoted his own children, by fire, to strange gods, in the blood-stained valley of Ben-Hinnom. Wickedness now reigned on high, and as usual persecuted righteousness and truth; so that, by a strong but significant hyperbole, we are told that innocent blood flowed in the streets of Jerusalem like water.

While these things were transacting in Judah, Esarhaddon the king of Assyria was consolidating his power, and endeavouring to re-unite the broken fragments of his father's empire. It was not until the thirtieth year of his reign that he recovered Babylon, the affairs of which appear to have fallen into great disorder after the death of Merodach-Baladan, if we may judge from the occurrence of five reigns and two interregnums of ten years, all in the course of the twenty-nine years, which preceded its reduction again under the Assyrian yoke.

When Esarhaddon had sufficiently re-established his authority, and settled his affairs in the east, he turned his attention westward, and determined to restore his authority in that quarter, and to avenge the disgrace and loss which the Assyrians had sustained in Palestine. This intention constituted him Jehovah's avenger upon the king and nation of Judah, for the manifold iniquities into which they had by this time fallen.

Esarhaddon entered Judah in great force, defeated Manasseh in battle, took him alive, and sent him in chains to Babylon, together with many of his nobles and of the people. They were sent to Babylon probably because Esarhaddon, to prevent another defection, made that city his chief residence during the last thirteen years of his reign. It was probably on the

same occasion that he removed the principal remaining inhabitants of Israel, and replaced them by more colonists from the East.

In the solitude of his prison at Babylon, Manasseh became an altered and a better man. The sins of his past life, and the grievous errors of his government were brought vividly before him; and humbling himself before the God of his fathers, he cried earnestly for pardon, and besought an opportunity of evincing the sincerity of his repentance. The history makes mention of his prayer, as having been preserved; and the Apocrypha contains a prayer which purports to be that which he used on this occasion. This it would be difficult to prove; but the prayer itself is a good one, and suitable to the occasion.

His prayer was heard, and the opportunity which he sought was granted to him. Esar-haddon gave way to the suggestions of a more generous policy than that by which he had been at first actuated. He released the captive from his prison, and after having, we may presume, won him over to the interests of Assyria, and weaned from the national bias in favour of an Egyptian alliance, sent him home with honour. Unquestionably, he remained tributary to the Assyrian monarch, and his territory was probably considered as forming a useful barrier between the territories of Assyria and of Egypt. On his return, Manasseh applied himself with great diligence to the correction of the abuses of his former reign. He also fortified the city of Zion on the west side by a second high wall (or, perhaps, he only rebuilt and carried to a greater height the wall which the Assyrians had thrown down), and endeavoured as far as possible to restore the weakened kingdom to a better state. He died in 696 B.C., after a protracted reign of fifty-five years; and, mindful of the first iniquities of his reign, a place in the Sepulchre of the Kings (1) was denied him, but he was buried in his own garden.

AMON the son of Manasseh was twenty-five years of age when he ascended the throne of Judah. He had been born after the repentance and restoration of his father; yet the first ways of Manasseh, and not the last, were those which he chose to follow. He revived the idolatries which had been suppressed; but the full development of his plans and character was interrupted by a conspiracy, in which he perished after a short reign of two years. 639 B.C.

Josiah was but eight years old at the death of his father; and during his minority the affairs of the government were administered by the high-priest Joachim and a council of elders at Jerusalem.* The young king profited well by the excellent education he received under the tutelage of the high-priest. After a minority of eight years he assumed the government, and proceeded to act with far greater vigour against the idolatries of the land than the regent had ventured to exercise. He not only destroyed every form of idolatry which he was able to detect, but overthrew the altars illegally erected to Jehovah, and corrected the other irregularities which had in previous times been tolerated. In the course of these purgations, which were conducted by the king in person, he came to Bethel, and there (according to the prediction made nearly four centuries before, which had mentioned him *by name*) he defiled the altar which Jeroboam had erected before the golden calf in that place, by burning thereon the disinterred bones of dead men—the bones of the worshippers. And it was thus that the idolatrous altars were defiled by him throughout the land.

The zeal of the king took him beyond the limits of his own kingdom into the land of Israel, which he traversed even to its remoter parts, uprooting idolatry and all its adjuncts,

* It is to the time of this minority that Dr. Hales would ascribe that invasion of Judea by the Assyrians which is recorded in the apocryphal book of Judith, and there only. That learned writer regards it as perfectly consonant with the whole range of sacred and profane history, and thinks that it supplies some important links in both which cannot be found elsewhere. For ourselves, the more closely we inspect that narrative, the more we are inclined to dissent from this conclusion. The entire silence of the sacred writers *and of Josephus*, who often relates matters not to be found in the Scriptures, with reference to circumstances of such very great importance, is alone calculated to produce much misgiving and suspicion; and on reference to the narration itself, so many manifest errors are detected, so many circumstances which certainly were not true, and others which could not by any possibility be true, and so many difficulties which it is impossible to reconcile with known history—that we have been led, with considerable reluctance, to conclude that the narrative in the book of Judith is utterly unworthy of historical credit, and cannot be regarded as even "founded on facts." It is in our eyes merely a fiction of a non-descript character between the historical romance and the religious novel of our own day, but without the naturalness of the one or the proximate truth of the other. It is useless to occupy our space with the narration of circumstances related on authority to which we feel unable to attach the least degree of credit.

wherever he came. For this rather remarkable proceeding out of his own kingdom there are different ways of accounting. The most probable seems to be that in restoring Manasseh to his throne, the king of Assyria had extended his authority (for the purpose of internal government) over the neighbouring territory. His favour and confidence, continued to Josiah, agrees with and helps to explain some other circumstances.

When these operations were completed, measures were taken for a thorough repair of the temple. While this was in progress, the high-priest, Hilkiah, discovered the autograph copy of the Law, written by the hand of Moses, which had been deposited in or beside the ark of the covenant in the sanctuary. By his direction Shaphan, the chief scribe, read therefrom in the audience of the king, who no sooner heard that part which contains the prophecies of Moses against the nation, foretelling the captivities and destructions which should befall it for its iniquities, than Josiah knew by signs not to be mistaken, that the predicted calamities were imminent, for the iniquities had been rife, and the doom could not but soon follow; already, indeed, by the captivity of Israel, it had been half accomplished. It was for this that the king rent his garments.* He delayed not to send to Huldah the prophetess, "who dwelt in the college at Jerusalem," to learn from her the real intentions of Jehovah, and the sense in which these alarming denunciations were to be understood. She confirmed the obvious interpretation,—that the unquenchable wrath of God would ere long be poured out upon Judah and Jerusalem, consuming, or bringing into bondage, the land, the city, the temple, the people, the king:—but adding, for the king himself, that because of the righteousness which had been found in him, he should be gathered to his grave before those evil days arrived.

By these disclosures new zeal for the Law was kindled in the heart of Josiah. The very same year, he caused the passover to be celebrated with great solemnity, in which not only the people of Judah, but the remnant of the Hebrew race which the Assyrians had left in the land of Israel, joined. There had been no such passover since the foundation of the kingdom.

To understand the circumstances which led to the death of king Josiah, it is necessary to view correctly the position of his kingdom, as a frontier barrier between the two great kingdoms of Assyria and Egypt, whose borders, by the conquests of the former power were, and had for some time been, in close and dangerous approximation. It is obvious that, from the first, the political game of Western Asia in that age lay between Egypt and Assyria, the former power being the only power west of the Euphrates which could for an instant be expected to resist or retaliate the aggressive movements of the latter. There was little question that the rich and fertile valley of the Nile might tempt the cupidity or the ambition of the Assyrians. It was therefore the obvious policy of the kings of Egypt to maintain the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, as a barrier between their country and the Assyrians, and it was the equally obvious policy of the latter to break that barrier down. Hence Hoshea in Israel had been encouraged by Sabaco to assert his independence, with a promise of support, which there is reason to believe that the Egyptian king was less unwilling than unable to render. The fall of Israel, as it weakened the barrier, could not but be a matter of regret to the Egyptians, and it would still be their desire to strengthen the hands of the kings of Judah. In this position it became a question at Jerusalem, as it had been in Samaria, whether the forbearance of the Assyrians should be purchased by submission, or that reliance should be reposed on the support of Egypt in opposition to that great power. The kings and people seem to have been generally well disposed "to lean upon Egypt," not more from habit and ancient intercourse, than from the perception that it was clearly the interest of that country to support them against the Assyrians. But when it had happened more than once that Egypt, after having encouraged them to shake off the Assyrian yoke, was unable (we cannot believe unwilling) to render the stipulated assist-

* It is quite evident that the king had never before read or heard these denunciations of the law, which seems hard to account for, when we consider that copies of the law do not appear to have been scarce, the rather as, no great while before, many copies had been made under the direction of Hezekiah. It has been suggested that the book in common use, and even that used by kings and priests, was some abstract, like our abridgment of the statutes, which contained only matters of positive law, omitting the promises and threatenings. The king being impatient to know the contents, the scribe begins to read immediately; and as the books of the times were written upon long scrolls, and rolled upon a stick, the latter part of Deuteronomy would come first in course; and there the scribe would find those terrible threatenings whereby the king was so strongly affected. See Deut. xxviii.

ance at the time it was most needed, and left them exposed to the tender mercies of the provoked Assyrians, the prophets raised their voice against a confidence and an alliance by which nothing but calamity had been produced, and encouraged unreserved and quiet submission to the Assyrian yoke. Even Hezekiah however, as we have seen, was induced by the prospect of support from Egypt, to throw off his dependence on Assyria. The consequent invasion of Judah by Sennacherib was so obviously threatening to Egypt, that Sethos (the king who then reigned in Lower Egypt) could only have been prevented by the state of affairs in his own dominion from rendering the assistance which he had led the king of Judah to expect. But, as already stated, this very unwarlike person—a priest by education and habit—had so offended the powerful military caste by abridgments of their privileges, that they refused to act, even in defence of the country. But when Tirhakah, the Ethiopian, who ruled in Upper Egypt, heard of the threatened invasion by Sennacherib, he marched against him; and the Scriptural account would imply that the mere rumour of his approach sufficed to induce the Assyrians to contemplate a retreat, which was hastened by the singular destruction in his army by the pestilential simoom.* This solitary example of assistance from Egypt, although from an unexpected quarter, may be supposed to have strengthened the predilection of the king and people of Judah towards the Egyptian alliance; and it was almost certainly with the concurrence of Egypt that Manasseh allowed himself to incur the wrath of the Assyrians. But during his imprisonment at Babylon he would seem to have acquired the conviction that it was his best policy to adhere to his Assyrian vassalage; and we may conclude he was not released without such oaths and covenants as his awakened conscience bound him to observe. He was probably restored to his throne as a sworn tributary, or as being bound to keep the country as a frontier against Egypt. The conduct of Josiah renders this the most probable conclusion.

The Assyrian power got involved in wars with the Medes and Chaldeans, by which its attention was fully engaged and its energies weakened. Egypt, on the other hand, united under one king, had been consolidating its strength. Pharaoh-Necho, the king of that country, thought the opportunity favourable to act aggressively against the Assyrians, and to that end resolved to march and attack this old enemy on his old frontier. Carchemish, an important post on the Euphrates, and the key of Assyria on the western side, was the point to which his march was directed. He passed along the sea-coast of Palestine, northward, the route usually followed by the Egyptian kings when they entered Asia. Josiah being apprised of this, and mindful of his relation to Assyria, and of his obligation to defend the frontier against the Egyptians, assembled his forces and determined to impede, if he could not prevent, the march of Necho through his territories. When the Egyptian king heard that Josiah had posted himself on the skirts of the plain of Esdraelon—that great battle-field of nations—to oppose his progress, he sent messengers to engage him to desist from his interference, alleging that he had no hostile intentions against Judah, but against an enemy with whom he was at war, and warning Josiah that his imprudent interference might prove fatal to himself and his people. But these considerations had no weight with Josiah, against what appeared to him a clear case of duty. He resisted the progress of the Egyptian army with great spirit, considering the disproportion of numbers. He himself fought in disguise; but a commis-

* Sir J. G. Wilkinson alleges, we know not on what authority, that Sennacherib was fought and beaten by Tirhakah, and attributes to the jealousy of the Memphites the version of the affair given to Herodotus, by which he considers the truth to be disguised and the glory of Tirhakah obscured. This version is, that the Assyrians actually invaded Egypt; and Sethos being unsupported by the military, was induced by a dream to march against the enemy at the head of an undisciplined rabble of artisans and labourers. While the two parties were encamped opposite each other, near Pelusium, a prodigious number of field mice visited the Assyrian camp by night and gnawed to pieces their quivers and bows, as well as the handles of their shields; so that, in the morning, finding themselves without arms, they fled in confusion, losing great numbers of their men. This is the story which Sir J. G. Wilkinson regards as invented by the Memphites to withdraw from Tirhakah the credit of the Assyrian overthrow, which was really his work. But from the cast given to the story, we are very much more disposed to believe that it is rather a version of the extraordinary overthrow which the Assyrians sustained *by night* in Palestine, and which the Egyptians desired to appropriate to their own country and their own gods. Or may it not be that, seeing the Hebrews alleged their God to be the Creator of the world, the Egyptians considered him the same as Pthah, the creator in their mythology, and whose priest Sethos had been? This seems to us very likely, the rather as it is difficult without this supposed identity to account for a circumstance in a following reign, when Necho expected to influence the pious Josiah by telling that God had sent him (Necho) to war against the Assyrians.

sioned arrow found him out, and inflicted a mortal wound in the neck. He directed his attendants to remove him from the battle-field. Escaping from the heavy shower of arrows with which their broken ranks were overwhelmed, they removed him from the chariot in which he was wounded, and placing him in "a second one that he had," they conveyed him to Jerusalem, where he died. Thus prematurely perished, at the age of thirty-nine, one of the best and most zealous kings who ever sat upon the throne of David. His zeal in his vocation, as the overturner of idolatry, must have been much stimulated by the knowledge that he had been preordained, by name, to this service, many centuries before his birth. We know not why the last act of his life should be deemed blameworthy by many who in other respects think highly of his character and reign. Was it not rather noble and heroic in him to oppose the vast host of Necho, in obedience to the obligation which his family had incurred to the Assyrian kings, and in consideration of which his grandfather, his father, and himself, had been permitted to exercise the sovereign authority in the land? The death of Josiah was lamented by the prophet Jeremiah in an elegiac ode, which has not been preserved.

Intent upon his original design, Necho paused not to avenge himself upon the Judahites for the opposition he had encountered, but continued his march to the Euphrates.

Three months had scarcely elapsed, when, returning victorious from the capture of Carchemish and the defeat of the Assyrians, he learned that the people had called a younger son of Josiah, named Jehoahaz or Shallum, twenty-three years old, to the throne, overlooking his elder brother. Displeased that such a step had been taken without any reference to the will of their now paramount lord and conqueror, he sent and summoned Jehoahaz to attend on him at Riblah in the land of Hamath; and having deposed him and condemned the land to pay in tribute a hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold, he took him as a prisoner to Jerusalem. On arriving there, Necho made Eliakim, the eldest son of Josiah, king in the room of his father, changing his name to Jehoiakim, according to a custom frequently practised by lords paramount and masters towards subject princes and slaves. The altered name was a mark of subjection. Then taking the silver and gold which he had levied upon the people, Necho departed for Egypt, taking with him the captive Jehoahaz, who there terminated his short and inglorious career, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah.*

Jehoiakim, the eldest son of Josiah, was twenty-five years old when he began to reign. He reigned eleven years, and by his idolatries and misgovernment proved himself worthy of the throne of Ahaz and Manasseh. Early in his reign he was called to repentance by the prophet Jeremiah, who publicly, at the feast of tabernacles, in the ears of the assembled nation, denounced, in the name of Jehovah, the severest judgments against king and people, including the destruction of the city and the temple. For this he was seized as a seditious person, worthy of death; but he was acquitted by the nobles, and on this and other occasions screened by some persons of influence who had been in power in the good times of Josiah.

Meanwhile the war in the East approached its termination. The allied Medes and Babylonians—the former under Cyaxares, and the latter under Nabopolassar—besieged the last Assyrian king in Nineveh. The siege was turned into a blockade; and Nabopolassar, already assuming the government of the empire which had fallen from the enfeebled hands of the Assyrians, despatched his son Nebuchadnezzar westward, with an adequate force, to chastise the Egyptians for their late proceedings, and to restore the revolted Syrians and Phœnicians to their obedience. In these different objects he completely succeeded.† Carchemish ‡ he recovered from the Egyptians, and Jehoiakim was compelled to transfer his allegiance from Necho to the Babylonian. This was in the first year of his reign; in the second Nineveh was taken and destroyed by the allies. The conquering Medes were content to have secured their independence and avenged their wrongs, and left to the conquering Chaldeans the lion's share of the spoil. Babylon now became the imperial capital; but Nabopolassar himself, the founder of the great Chaldæ-Babylonian empire, died almost immediately after the fall of Nineveh, and the young hero in the west was called to fill the glorious throne which his father had set up.

* Jer. xxii. 10—12. † Berosus in Joseph. 'Antiq.' x. 11, 1. ‡ Jer. xlvii. 2.

The absence of Nebuchadnezzar in another quarter seemed to the king of Egypt a favourable opportunity of recovering his foreign conquests. He therefore undertook another expedition against Carchemish;* and as Jehoiakim, in Judea, renounced, about the same time, his sworn allegiance to Nebuchadnezzar, there is much reason to conclude that he was encouraged to this step by the Egyptian king. This measure was earnestly but ineffectually reprobated by the prophet Jeremiah, who foretold the consequences which actually followed.

Nebuchadnezzar, who was certainly the greatest general of that age, did not allow the Egyptian king to surprise him. He met and defeated him at Carchemish, and then, pursuing his victory, stripped the Egyptian of all his northern possessions, from the river Euphrates to the Nile, and this by so strong an act of repression that he dared "come no more out of his own land."

The king of Judah now lay at the mercy of the hero whose anger he had so unadvisedly provoked. Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to Jerusalem, and took it. He committed no destructions but such as were the direct effect of his military operations; and with a leniency very rare in those days, he refrained from displacing Jehoiakim from his throne. He was content to indemnify himself by the spoils of the temple, part of the golden ornaments and vessels of which he took away; and with removing to Babylon some members of the royal family, and sons of the principal nobles. These would serve as hostages, and at the same time help to swell the pomp and ostentation of the Babylonian court. Among the persons thus removed was Daniel and his three friends, whose condition and conduct will soon engage our notice, as part of the history of the Captivity. It must be evident that the leniency exhibited on this occasion by Nebuchadnezzar, may be ascribed to his desire to maintain the kingdom of Judah as a barrier between his Syrian dominions and Egypt; for since Egypt had become aggressive, it was no longer his interest that this barrier should be destroyed.

The court at Jerusalem soon again fell into much disorder. The king turned a deaf ear to all wise counsel and all truth, as delivered by the prophet Jeremiah, and listened only to the false prophets who won his favour by the flattering prospects which they drew, and by the chimerical hopes which they created. The final result was, that this prince again had the temerity to renounce his allegiance to the Babylonian, to whose clemency he owed his life and throne.

This occurred in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, B.C. 604, which it is important to note, as it is from this date that the "seventy years" of the Babylonish captivity is with the greatest apparent propriety dated.† This period of seventy years of exile was foretold by Jeremiah;‡ and it is most remarkable that from whichever of the more marked points these seventy years be commenced, we are brought at the termination to some one equally marked point in the history of the restoration and re-settlement of the nation.

Jehoiakim was not at all reformed by the calamity which had befallen his house and country. It only served to increase the ferocity of his spirit. This reign therefore continued to be cruel, tyrannical, and oppressive, and still more and more, "his eyes and his heart were intent on covetousness, oppression, and the shedding of innocent blood." Of this an instance is found in the case of the prophet Urijah, "whom he slew with the sword, and cast his dead body into the graves of the common people," because he prophesied of the impending calamities of Judah and Jerusalem.§ For these things the *personal* doom of Jehoiakim was thus pronounced by Jeremiah:—

"—— Thus saith JEHOVAH,
Concerning Jehoiakim, son of Josiah, king of Israel,—

* Jer. xlvi. 2.

† Jer. xxv. 11; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21—23.

‡ Dated from this point, the seventy years expired in B.C. 536, the year that Cyrus took Babylon, and issued a decree for the return of such of the Jews as chose, throughout his dominions, to their own land (Ezra iii. 1, v. 13); and this agrees with the account of Josephus, "in the first year of Cyrus, which was the seventieth (το εβδομηκοστον) from the day of the removal of our people from their native land to Babylon," &c. (Ant. xi. 1, 1); for from B.C. 605 to B.C. 536 was sixty-nine years complete, or seventy years current. Hales, to whom we are indebted for this conclusion, thinks, that it affords a satisfactory adjustment of the chronology of this most intricate and disputed period of the Captivity, and that in it "all the varying reports of sacred and profane chronology are reconciled and brought into harmony with each other.

§ Jer. xxii. 13—16, xxvi. 20—23.

They shall not lament for him, saying,
Ah, my brother! nor [*for the queen*], Ah, sister!
They shall not lament for him, saying,
Ah, Lord! nor [*for her*], Ah, her glory!
With the burial of an ass shall he be buried,
Drawn forth and cast beyond the gates of Jerusalem."*

For this prophecy the prophet was cast into prison, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim. The following year, acted upon by that strong *constraint* to deliver the word entrusted to him, which he himself so forcibly describes,† Jeremiah dictated to his friend and follower, the scribe Baruch, another prophecy, to the same effect as the former, but couched in stronger language, declaring the ruin which impended, through the Babylonian king, unless speedy and strong repentance intervened to avert the doom. The roll, thus written, Baruch was sent to read publicly to the people assembled from all the country on account of a solemn fast for which public opinion had called. Baruch accordingly read it in the court of the temple, in the audience of all the people assembled there. He afterwards, at their request, read it more privately to the princes. They heard it with consternation, and determined to make its contents known to the king. Baruch was directed to go and conceal himself, and the roll was taken and read to the king, who was then sitting in his winter apartment, with a brazier of burning charcoal before him. When he had heard three or four sections, the king, kindled into rage, and taking the roll from the reader, he cut it with the scribe's knife, and threw it into the fire, where it was consumed. He also ordered the prophet and his friend to be put to death; but this was averted by the kind providence of the Almighty Master whom they served.

The undaunted prophet directed Baruch to re-write the prophecy which had been burnt, with additional matter of the same purport; while to Jehoiakim himself the terrible message was sent:—

"—— Thus saith Jehovah,
Concerning Jehoiakim, king of Judah,—
He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David;
And his dead body shall be cast out,
In the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost."—Jer. xxxvi. 30.

The end of this miserable man doubtless corresponded with these predictions, although the historical narrative of that event is involved in some obscurity and apparent contradiction. The statement we shall now give appears to be the only one by which, as it appears to us, all these difficulties can be reconciled. It is evident that if Jehoiakim did not again revolt, his conduct was at least so unsatisfactory to the king of Babylon, that he sent an army against Jerusalem, containing some Chaldean troops, but composed chiefly from the surrounding subject nations, as the Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites. *In what manner* they performed their mission we know not, but according to the figurative description which Ezekiel ‡ gives of Jehoiakim as a rapacious "lion's whelp," we learn that "the nations from the provinces set about him on every side, and spread their net over him, and he was taken in their pit; and they secured him with chains, and brought him to the king of Babylon." Nebuchadnezzar was then probably at Riblah, at which place the eastern conquerors appear to have usually held their court when in Syria. He bound the captive king "with fetters [intending] to carry him to Babylon;"§ but took him first to Jerusalem, where he appears to have died before this intention could be executed; and the prophecies require us to conclude that his body was cast forth with indignity, and lay exposed to the elements and beasts of prey, which is what is intended by "the burial of an ass."

* Jer. xxii. 18, 19.

† "Thou didst persuade me, Jehovah, and I was persuaded;
Thou wast stronger than I, and didst prevail.
I am every day the object of laughter;
Every one of them holdeth me in derision.
For whensoever I speak,—
If I cry out of violence, and proclaim devastation,
The word of Jehovah is turned against me,
Into reproach and disgrace continually.
But when I say, I will not make mention of it,
Neither will I speak any more in his name;
Then it becomes in my heart as a burning fire,
Being pent up in my bones:
I am weary with refraining, and cannot [*be silent*]."
Jer. xx. 7—9.

‡ Ezek. ix. 5—9

§ 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6.

The preceding invaders appear to have been contented with securing the person of Jehoiakim, and taking him to Nebuchadnezzar; for when they had departed with their royal captive; the people made his son JECONIAH (otherwise Jehoiachim and Coniah) king in the room of his father. He was then (B.C. 597) eighteen years of age, and had barely time to manifest his bad disposition, when Nebuchadnezzar himself, who was displeased at this appointment, appeared before Jerusalem. It would seem that he was admitted without opposition; but Jeconiah was, nevertheless, held a close prisoner. The money which remained in the royal treasury, and the golden utensils of the temple, were collected and sent as spoil to Babylon; and the deposed king, and his whole court, seven thousand soldiers, one thousand artisans, and two thousand nobles and men of wealth, altogether, with wives and children, amounting probably to 40,000 persons, were sent away into captivity to the river Chebar (Chaboras) in Mesopotamia. Thus only the lower class of citizens and peasantry were left behind. The future prophet, Ezekiel, was among the captives; and Mattaniah, the remaining son of Josiah, and brother of Jehoiakim, was made king of the impoverished land by Nebuchadnezzar, who, according to the custom in such cases, changed his name to ZEDEKIAH, and bound him by strong and solemn oaths of allegiance.

The Hebrews who remained in Judah continued however to cherish dreams of independence from the Chaldeans—impossible under the circumstances in which Western Asia was then placed, or possible only through such special interventions of Providence as had glorified their early history, but all further claim to which they had long since forfeited. Even the captives in Mesopotamia and Chaldea were looking forward to a speedy return to their own land. These extravagant expectations were strongly discouraged by Jeremiah in Jerusalem, and by Ezekiel in Mesopotamia; but their reproofs were not heeded, nor their prophecies believed. Accordingly, Zedekiah, who seems not to have been ill-disposed, otherwise than as influenced by evil counsellors, was led openly to renounce his allegiance, in the ninth year of his reign. The temerity of this act would be astonishing and unaccountable, were it not that, as usual, the renunciation was attended by an alliance with the king of Egypt, Pharaoh-Hophra—the Apries and Vaphres of profane authors—who indeed had acquired a prominence in this quarter which might make the preference of his alliance seem a comparatively safe speculation. Apries in the early part of his reign was a very prosperous king. He sent an expedition against the Isle of Cyprus; besieged and took Gaza,* and the city of Sidon; engaged and vanquished the king of Tyre; and, being uniformly successful, he made himself master of Phœnicia, and part of Palestine; thus recovering much of that influence in Syria which had been taken from Egypt by the Assyrians and Babylonians.

From the result it is evident that, on receiving the news of this revolt of one who owed his throne to him, and whose fidelity to him had been pledged by the most solemn vows, Nebuchadnezzar resolved no longer to attempt to maintain the separate existence of Judah as a royal state, but to incorporate it absolutely, as a province, with his empire. An army was, with little delay, marched into Judea, and laid immediate siege to Jerusalem. Jeremiah continued to counsel the king to save the city and temple by unreserved submission to the Chaldeans, and abandonment of the Egyptian alliance; but his auditors, trusting that the Egyptians would march to the relief of the place, determined to protract the defence of the city to the utmost. The Egyptians did, in fact, march to their assistance; but when Nebuchadnezzar raised the siege of Jerusalem and advanced to meet them, they retreated before him into Egypt, without hazarding a battle.

The withdrawal of the Chaldean forces from Jerusalem, with the confident expectation that they would be defeated by the Egyptians, filled the inhabitants with the most extravagant joy, and quite reversed—and so evinced the hollowness of—the slight acts of repentance and reformation which the apparent urgency of danger had produced. Their short-lived joy was terminated by the re-appearance of the Chaldeans before the city. They prepared, however, to make a vigorous, or at least a protracted, defence, for they well knew that, after so many provocations,

* Jer. xlvii. 1.

little mercy was to be expected from Nebuchadnezzar, and they were probably acquainted with the fell purpose which that great monarch appears to have formed.

In the account of this siege much notice is taken of the respective works, the forts, the towers, etc. of the besiegers and the besieged. This may throw some light on the state to which the art of attacking and defending towns had then attained. The subject has some degree of interest; and some notice of it will be taken at the end of this chapter. (2)

The siege was continued until the eleventh year of Zedekiah (B.C. 586), eighteen months from the beginning, when the Chaldeans stormed the city about midnight, and put the inhabitants to the sword, young and old, many of them in the very courts of the temple. The king himself, with his sons, his officers, and the remnant of the army, escaped from the city, but were pursued by the Chaldeans, and overtaken in the plain of Jericho, and carried as prisoners to Nebuchadnezzar, who was then at Riblah in the province of Hamah. The Babylonian king upbraided Zedekiah for his ingratitude and breach of faith, and ordered a terrible punishment to be inflicted on him. To cut off all future hope of reigning in his race, he ordered his sons to be slain before his eyes; and then, to exclude him from all hope of ever again reigning in his own person, he ordered that the last throes of his murdered children should be his last sight in this world. His eyes were put out—a barbarous mode of disqualifying a man for political good or evil, with which the governments of the East still continue to visit those whose offences excite displeasure, or whose pretensions create fear. The blind king was then led in fetters of brass to Babylon, where he died. Thus were fulfilled two prophecies, by different and distant prophets, which by their apparent dissonance had created mirth and derision in Jerusalem. Jeremiah had told the king, after the return of the Chaldean army to the siege, that he should surely be taken prisoner; that his eyes should see the king of Babylon, and that he should be carried captive to Babylon, and that he should die there, not by the sword, but in peace, and with the same honourable "burnings" with which his fathers had been interred;* while Ezekiel had predicted that he should be brought captive to Babylon, yet should never see that city, although he should die therein.†

Nebuchadnezzar appears to have been dissatisfied at the only partial manner in which his purposes against Judah had been executed. He therefore sent Nebuzaradan, the captain of his guard, with an army of Chaldeans to Jerusalem. The temple and the city were then burnt to the ground, and all the walls demolished, while all the vessels of brass, silver, and gold, which had been left before, and all the treasure of the temple, the palace, and the houses of the nobles, were taken for spoil; and of the people none were left but the poor of the land to be vine-dressers and husbandmen. This was about a month after the city was first taken.

Thus was the land made desolate, that "she might enjoy her sabbaths," or the arrearage of sabbatic years, of which she had been defrauded by the avarice and disobedience of the people. That these sabbatic years, being the celebration of every seventh year as a season of rest, even to the soil which then lay fallow, amounted to not less than seventy, shows how soon, and how long, that important and faith-testing institution had been neglected by the nation. The early predictions of Moses,‡ and the later one of Jeremiah,§ that the land should enjoy the *rest* of which it had been defrauded, is very remarkable, when we consider that, as exemplified in Israel, it was not the general policy of the conquerors to leave the conquered country in desolation, but to replenish it by foreign colonists, by whom it might be cultivated.

Nebuchadnezzar made Gedaliah, a Hebrew of distinction, governor of the poor remnant which was left in the land. Gedaliah was a well-disposed man, of a generous and unsuspecting nature, who was anxious to promote the well-being of the people by reconciling them to the Babylonian government. In this design he was assisted by Jeremiah, who had been released from prison when the city was taken, and was treated with much consideration by the Babylonian general, to whose care he had been recommended by Nebuchadnezzar himself. Nebuzaradan indeed offered to take him to Babylon and provide for him there; but the prophet chose rather to remain with his friend Gedaliah, who fixed his residence at Mizpeh beyond Jordan.

* Jer. xxxii. 4, 5; xxxiv. 3, 5. † Ezek. xii. 13. ‡ Lev. xxvi. 34. § 2 Chron. xxxvi. 31.

As soon as the Babylonian army had withdrawn, those nobles and warriors returned who had saved themselves by flight in the first instance. Among these was Ishmael, a prince of the royal family, who, jealous of the possession by Gedaliah of the government to which he considered that his birth gave him the best right, formed a conspiracy to take away his life. This was intimated to the governor, but he treated it as an infamous calumny upon Ishmael, which generous confidence was rewarded by his being murdered, with all the Hebrews and Chaldeans at Mizpeh who were attached to him, by that bad man and his dependants. The vengeance of the Chaldeans was now to be dreaded, and therefore Ishmael and all his followers fled towards the country of the Ammonites (who had promoted the designs of Ishmael). They attempted to take with them the king's daughter and the residue of the people; but these were recovered by Johanan and other officers, who pursued them, so that Ishmael escaped with only eight men to the Ammonites. Johanan and the others were fearful of the effects of the resentment of the Chaldeans for the massacre of which Ishmael had been guilty. They therefore determined to take refuge in Egypt with all the people. This intention was earnestly opposed by Jeremiah, who, in the name of Jehovah, promised them peace and safety if they remained; but threatened death by pestilence, famine, and sword, if they went down to Egypt. They went, however, and compelled Jeremiah himself to go with them; and it is alleged by tradition that they put him to death in that country for the ominous prophecies he continued to utter there.

Nebuzaradan soon after arrived in the country with the view of avenging the murder of Gedaliah and the massacre of the Chaldeans who were with him: but the country was so thin of inhabitants, in consequence of the secession to Egypt, that he could find no more than 745 persons in the land, whom he sent into captivity beyond the Euphrates. Thus signally was the long predicted depopulation of the land completed; and although nomadic tribes wandered through the country, and the Edomites settled in some of its southern parts, yet the land remained, on the whole, uninhabited, and ready for the Hebrews, whose return had as much been the subject of prophecy as their captivity had been.

For the clearer apprehension of the facts which have been stated, it will be desirable to trace the further operations of the Babylonians in those quarters.

The year after the conquest of Judea, Nebuchadnezzar resolved to take a severe revenge upon all the surrounding nations which had solicited the Judahites to a confederacy against him, or had encouraged them to rebel, although they now, for the most part, rejoiced in their destruction. These were the Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, Arabians, the Sidonians, Tyrians, and Philistines; nor did he forget the Egyptians, who had taken a foremost part in action or intrigue against him. This had been foretold by the prophets. It had been foretold that all these nations were to be subdued by Nebuchadnezzar, and were assigned to share with the Hebrews the bondage of seventy years to that power. Some of them were conquered sooner and some later; but the end of this period was the common term for the deliverance of them all from their bondage to Babylon.

After Nebuchadnezzar had subdued the eastern and western states in his first campaign, he commenced the siege of the strong city of Old Tyre, on the continent, in the year 584 b.c., being two years after the destruction of Jerusalem. This siege occupied thirteen years, a fact which illustrates, perhaps, not so much the strength of the place as the vitality of a commercial state. This is, however, only to intimate that during this period the city was invested by a Chaldean army; for many other important enterprises were undertaken and accomplished during the same period. It was during the siege that Nebuzaradan marched into Judea to avenge the murder of Gedaliah and the Chaldeans, as was just related.

Before Tyre was taken, the inhabitants, having the command of the sea, fled with all their effects to the insular Tyre in its neighbourhood; so that the Chaldean army found but little spoil to reward their long toil and patience in the siege. This had been foretold by the prophet Ezekiel;* but although Nebuchadnezzar and his army were to obtain "no wages for the great service they had served against Tyre," in the long course of which "every head was

* Ezek. xxix. 18—20.

made bald and every shoulder peeled," yet as a compensation they were promised the plunder of "the land of Egypt, her multitude, her spoil, and her prey." Accordingly, in the spring of the year 570 B.C., after the war with Tyre was finished, Nebuchadnezzar invaded Egypt, and, from a concurrence of weakening circumstances in that country, was enabled to overrun the whole country from Migdol, its northern extremity, near the Red Sea, to Syene, the southern, bordering upon Ethiopia. This he also subdued, together with the other auxiliaries of the Egyptians. The reigning king was the same Pharaoh-Hophra, or Apries, who was on the throne at the time Jerusalem was besieged, and whose faint and abortive motion to relieve his allies has been recorded. This proud and haughty tyrant was reduced to vassalage; and so wasted and depopulated was the land by the invaders, that it lay comparatively desolate for forty years. The king was himself soon after defeated and captured by his discontented and revolted subjects, under Amasis, who was made king, and who was reluctantly compelled by the clamours of the soldiers to inflict death upon his predecessor. Amasis was confirmed in the throne by the Assyrian king.*

* To this account, in which Hales and his authorities have been followed, it seems desirable to add the remarks which are found in Sir J. G. Wilkinson's recent work on the Ancient Egyptians (i. 174, &c.). After quoting the prophecies, which, in connection with the statements of Herodotus, are given *as history* in our own text, he says:—"I shall now endeavour to show how these prophecies were accomplished, and to explain the probable reason of Herodotus' silence on the subject of Nebuchadnezzar's invasion. The defeat and death of Apries, before mentioned, are given on the authority of Herodotus, who represents Amasis as a rebel chief, taking advantage of the disaffection of the army to dethrone his sovereign. This information he received from the Egyptian priests; but no mention was made of the signal defeat their army experienced, or of that loss of territory in Syria which resulted from the successes of the victorious Nebuchadnezzar. It is therefore reasonable to conclude that they disguised the truth from the Greek historian; and, without mentioning the disgrace which had befallen their country, and the interposition of a foreign power, attributed the change of the succession and the elevation of Amasis to the throne, solely to his ambition and the choice of the Egyptian soldiery.......Josephus expressly states that the Babylonian monarch led our army into Cœlo-Syria, of which he obtained possession, and then waged war on the Ammonites and Moabites. If Josephus be correct in this statement, there is reason to suppose that he alludes to Apries being deposed and succeeded by Amasis, and we can readily imagine that the Babylonians having extended their conquests to the extremity of Palestine, would, on the increase of intestine commotion in Egypt, hasten to take advantage of the opportunity thus afforded them, of attacking the country. And the civil war and the fatal consequences appear to have been predicted by Isaiah (xix. 2, &c.)...From a comparison of all these authorities, I conclude that the civil war between Apries and Amasis did not terminate in a single conflict, but lasted several years; and that either Amasis solicited the aid and intervention of Nebuchadnezzar, or that this prince, availing himself of the disordered state of the country, of his own accord invaded it, deposed the rightful sovereign, and placed Amasis on the throne, on condition of paying tribute to the Babylonians. The injury done to the lands and cities of Egypt by this invasion, and the disgrace with which the Egyptians felt themselves overwhelmed after such an event, would justify the account given in the Bible of the fall of Egypt, and to witness many of their compatriots taken captive to Babylon, and to become tributary to an enemy whom they held in abhorrence, would be considered by the Egyptians the greatest calamity, as though they had for ever lost their station in the scale of nations."

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES.

(1) The Sepulchre of the Kings, p. 609.— It would be rather difficult to prove that the ancient sepulchre which now bears this name, is really that to which there are such frequent allusions in the history of the kingdom of Judah. But it would be equally difficult to disprove it. The situation is not unsuitable, nor the internal arrangements unbecoming such a distinction. And if any difficulty were to be started with reference to the architectural character of the sculptured exterior, it might very easily be answered that this was added at a period long subsequent to the original construction of the tomb. It might also be added, that if this be not the Sepulchre of the Kings, no other sepulchre now existing near Jerusalem is entitled to compete that distinction with it. Upon the whole, this is a matter on which one would not like to give a decided opinion; but apart from this matter, the sepulchre in question is of great interest from the very complete example which it offers of the ancient sepulchres.

The Sepulchre of the Kings, so called, is situated nearly a mile to the north of the north-western gate [Damascus-gate] of the present city, but appears to have been only just outside the north-western angle of the ancient wall.

These splendid remains differ from most other rock-carved sepulchres in not being cut in the side of a hill, but beneath a level spot of ground approached by a narrow path, which leads to a square enclosure, hewn out of the limestone stratum, of about fifteen or twenty

feet deep. A wall of the natural rock separates this from an inner square court, which opens into it by a round arch. On the southern side of this court (which is covered with rubbish and brambles) is a very handsome square portico, with a beautifully carved architrave—forming probably the most complete specimen of Hebrew sculpture that now exists. The frieze is adorned with a regulus, trigliphs, vine-leaves, and other floral embellishments, while the centre is charged with an immense cluster of grapes. A pilaster at either end still remains, and in all probability there were anciently two columns in the centre, now destroyed. The face of the rock within the portico is smooth, and presents no appearance of openings, but a low door-way on the left hand leads into a large square antechamber, hewn out of the solid rock. There are no niches, or places for sarcophagi in this apartment, but a series of small chambers branch off on each of its three sides. These are for the most part oblong cryptæ, with ledges on either side for holding the bodies or coffins.

The *doors* of those chambers have attracted much and deserved attention; they are made of single stones, or slabs, seven inches thick, sculptured in panels, so as exactly to resemble doors made by a carpenter at the present day, the whole being completely smoothed and polished, and of the most accurate proportions. These doors turned on pivots, of the same stone, which were inserted in sockets above and below.

There are no troughs or soroi in any of the chambers, but simply ledges on the sides, for bodies or coffins.

A low door and a flight of steps lead down into another suite of chambers, of similar form and construction. In these are found some fine sarcophagi of unsurpassed elegance in form and ornament. Each of them consists of two half cylinders of white marble, excavated within, and which, when placed together, resemble the shaft of a beautiful pillar. The bottom part is comparatively plain; but the lid, or upper part, is covered with the most elaborately carved foliage in *basso relievo*, traced in vines, roses, and lily work. The groove, or cavity, for the body, which is principally hollowed out from the bottom part, is about two feet broad, and a foot deep,—a sufficiently large space to contain the body of an ordinary-sized person. The ends also of these sarcophagi are carved; and the general form and appearance might suggest a resemblance to the large carriage-trunks of former days. The niches for the sarcophagi form the segment of a dome, being somewhat differently shaped from some of those in the upper chambers. Above the place of each coffin is a small niche, apparently designed to contain a lamp.*

(2) "MILITARY WORKS," p. 616.—This is a large subject, on which we must endeavour to state the principal and more interesting facts in as few words as possible. We shall base the observations we have to offer on Professor Jahn's articles on the same subjects, availing ourselves of the information derivable from sources (principally Egyptian) with which he was unacquainted.

FORTIFICATIONS. — Military fortifications were at first nothing more than a trench or ditch dug around a few cottages on a hill or mountain, together with the mound which was formed of the earth dug out of it. It is, however, probable that sometimes, even in the earliest ages, scaffoldings were erected for the purpose of throwing stones with the greater effect against the enemy. In the age of Moses and Joshua, the walls which surrounded cities were elevated to no inconsiderable height, and were furnished with towers; but that they were of no great strength appears from the facility with which the Hebrews, who were unacquainted with the art of besieging towns, took so many of them, in the course of a few years, on both sides of the Jordan, although the fortifications had at first seemed very terrible to them.†

The art of fortification was encouraged and patronised by the Hebrew kings; and Jerusalem was always well defended, especially Mount Zion.

The principal parts of a fortification may be traced in the Scriptures, and were as follow:—

The Wall.—In some instances the wall erected around cities was double, and even triple.‡ Walls were commonly made lofty and broad, so as not easily to be passed over or broken through.§ The main wall terminated at the top in a parapet for the accommodation of the soldiers, which opened at intervals in what may be termed embrasures, so as to give them an opportunity of fighting with missile weapons. The embrasures and battlements were *square*, if like those of Egypt and Babylon.

* The above account of the Royal Sepulchres is abridged and slightly altered from a longer description in Dr. Wilde's 'Narrative,' ii. 298—301. The Rev. J. D. Paxton is another recent traveller, who has given a very clear description of these sepulchres, the exterior of which is represented in the cut at the head of the chapter, from a drawing by Mr. Arundale.

† Num. xiii. 28.

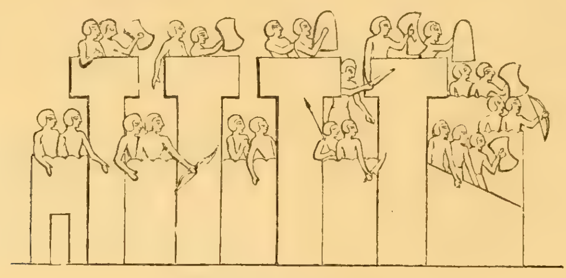
‡ 2 Chron. xxxii. 5.

§ Jer. li. 58.



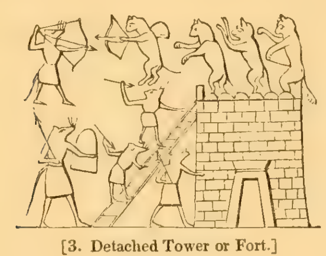
[1. Walls and Towers.—From Babylonian Coins.]

Towers.—Towers were erected at certain distances from each other on the top of the wall. They would appear to have been sometimes lofty, but in general not. They were flat roofed, and surrounded with a parapet, which sometimes exhibited openings similar to those which have just been mentioned in the parapets of the walls. Excellent examples of these towers, of both kinds, are given in the cuts at pp. 587, 588, and more will occur in the illustrations we are about to introduce. Towers of this kind were likewise erected



[2. Wall and Towers, manned.]

over the gates of cities; and in them guards were constantly kept, as is now the case in most walled towns of Western Asia. This was, at least, the case in the time of the kings. It was the business of these guards to report any unusual appearance which they discovered in the distance; and whenever they noticed an irruption from an enemy, they blew a trumpet.* Towers likewise, which were somewhat larger in size, were erected in different parts, particularly on elevated spots, and were guarded by a military force.† They were probably of a round form; for we find



[3. Detached Tower or Fort.]

that the circular edifices which are still erected in the solitudes of Arabia, still bear their ancient name of *castles* or *towers*. Of these an example has been given at p. 103. Of ancient specimens the only one we have been able to find is that which is here annexed (3),* which is remarkable for the peculiar form of the battlement. The watch-towers of the shepherds are to be distinguished from these, although it was not unusually the case that they were converted into military towers, and eventually into fortified cities.

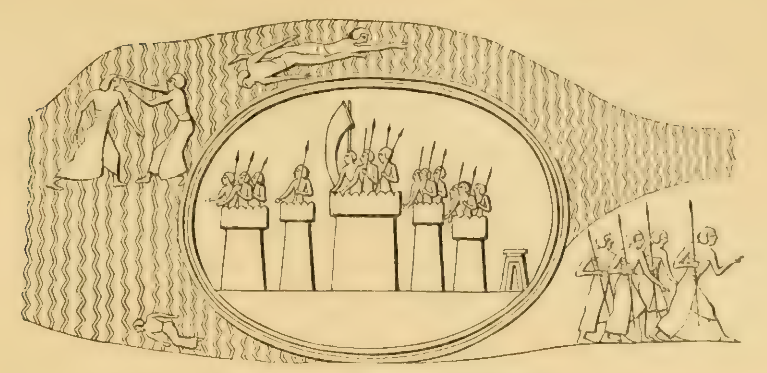
The Ditch.—The digging of a fosse increased the elevation of the walls of a town or fortress, and increased in the same proportion the difficulty of an enemy's approach.† The fosse, if the situation allowed, was filled with water. Of these we have the following interesting examples from Ancient Egypt. The first shows a fortress enclosed by a double wall, surrounded by a broad fosse filled with water. Warriors of the adverse parties are struggling in the water, and a party sallies forth at the gate over what appears to be a

* 2 Sam. xiii. 34; xviii. 26, 27; 2 Kings ix. 17—19; 2 Chron. xvii. 2; Nahum ii. 1.

† Judg. viii. 9, 17; ix. 46, 49, 51; Isa. xxi. 6; Hos v. 8; Habak. ii 1.

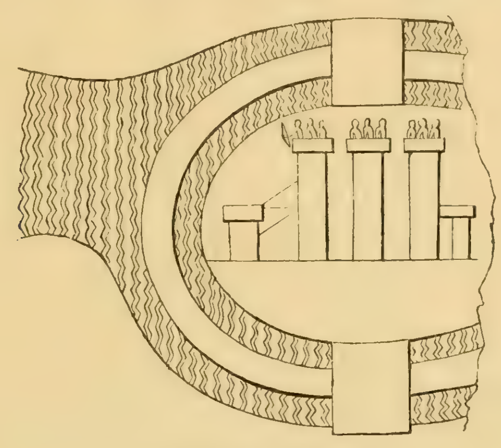
* It is from a curious papyrus in the Royal Museum at Tunis, of which a portion (including this figure) forms the frontispiece of Seyffarth's 'Beiträge zur Kenntniss des Alten Ægypten.'

† 2 Sam. xx. 15; Neh. iii. 8; Psa. xlviii. 13; Isa. xxvi. 1.



[4. Fortress with Fosse and Double Wall.]

bridge. The other is equally interesting, as it exhibits the peculiarity of two fosses, one within and the other without the wall, both filled with water, and crossed by bridges.



[5. Fortress with Double Fosse.]

The Gates were at first made of wood, and very small in size. They were constructed as valve-doors, and secured by wooden bars. Subsequently they were made larger and stronger, and covered with plates of brass or iron, that they might not be burnt. The bars were covered in the same manner to prevent their being cut asunder; they were sometimes wholly of iron. The bars were secured by a sort of lock.* The gates appear, upon the whole, to have much resembled those of modern Oriental towns. Having thus noticed the fortifications, we may proceed to describe the manner in which they were defended or taken, and shall be able incidentally to convey further information respecting the fortresses themselves.

Cities were usually taken by sudden and violent onsets, or by treason. These were usually the first experiments, and failing them, the besiegers either abandoned the enterprise, or prepared themselves for a long siege, in the management of which no very determinate rules appear to have been followed, beyond those which dictated the cutting off of all communications between the besieged place and the open country, that it might be the sooner compelled by famine to surrender. But when there were no machines to break down the walls, the operations were so tedious and protracted, that a siege was rarely had recourse to but as a last resort. When a city was threatened, it was, in the first place, *invited* to surrender.* If the besieged had resolved to capitulate, the principal men of the city went out into the enemy's camp, to obtain the best

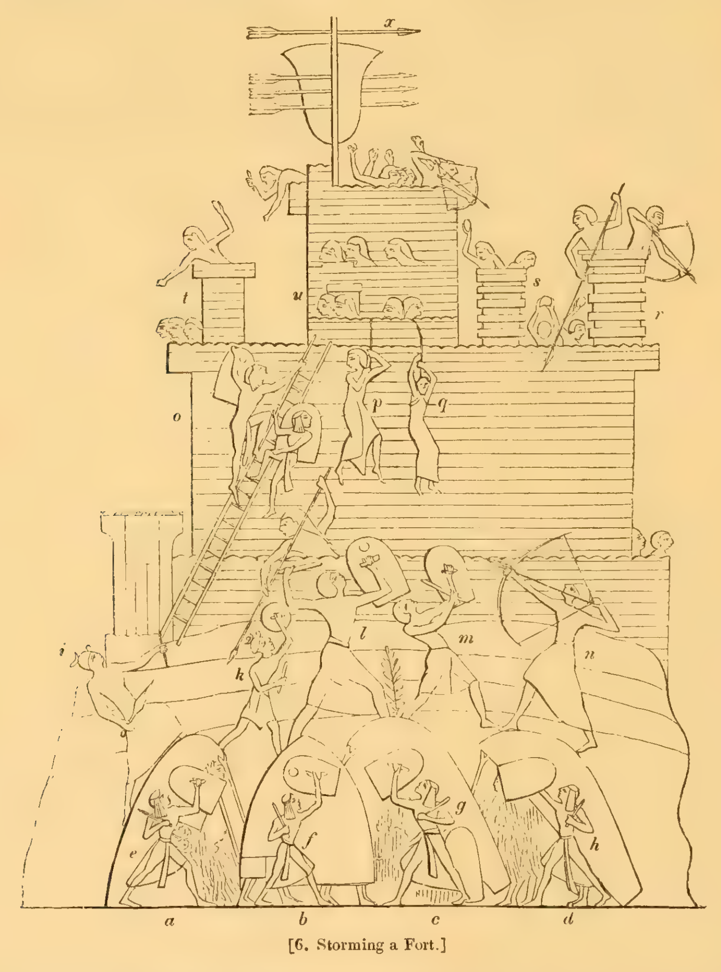
* Psa. cvii. 16; Isa. xlv. 2.

* Deut. xx. 10; Isa. xxxvi. 1; xxxvii. 8—20.

terms in their power. Hence "to go forth," or "to come out," in certain connections means the same as to surrender by capitulation.* In the most ancient ages the enemy surrounded the city with a band of men, sometimes only one, and at most only two or three deep, and effected their object by assault; hence the very common Scriptural phrases, "to encamp against a city," or, "to pitch against," or "to straighten it."†

The troops employed in the assault of fortified places were all provided with shields. This is shown by the Scriptural phrase, which expresses a siege of a town by "the lifting up of shields" against it;* and in Egypt so closely was the idea of a siege connected with the shield, that the figure of a king who is sometimes introduced in the sculptures as the representative of the whole army, advancing with his shield before him, is intended to show that the place was taken by assault.†

There is much reason to conclude that the practices of the Hebrews in besieging towns were the same as with the Egyptians, and in



[6. Storming a Fort.]

Figures *a, b, c, d,* are four sons of the king (Remeses the Great), each commanding a testudo, *e, f, g, h*; *i*, one of the Shairetana allies of the Egyptians, climbing up the rock by means of a short spike of metal thrust into the fissures of the stone; *k*, another of the same with a round shield; *l, m, n,* Egyptian light infantry and archers; *o*, two of the royal princes scaling the walls,—one is apparently thrown down, alluding, perhaps, to some accident which really occurred; *p, q,* heralds sent out of the fort to treat with the besiegers; *r, s, t,* the towers of the fort; *u*, the keep on which is hoisted the standard, *x*, pierced with arrows, the sign of defeat. This explanation is from Wilkinson, who has engraved the same subject.

* 1 Sam. xi. 3, 10, 11; 2 Kings xviii. 31; xxiv. 12; Jer. xxi. 9; xxxviii. 17, 18; 1 Mac. vi. 49.

† Josh. x 5; Judg. ix. 10; 1 Sam. xi. 1; 2 Kings xxv. 1; Isa. xxix. 3.

* 2 Kings xix. 32; Isa. xxxvii. 33.

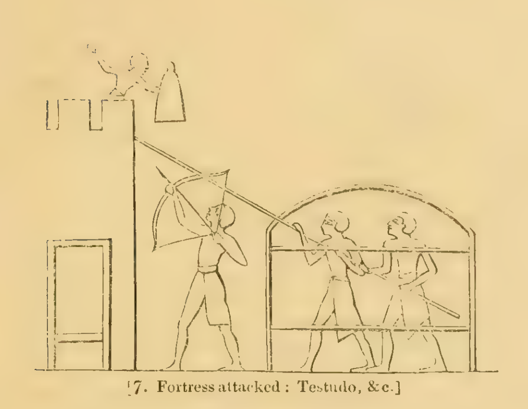
† Wilkinson, i. 359.

some particulars we *know* that they were so. We may, therefore, derive some information in contemplating the operations of a siege by that people.

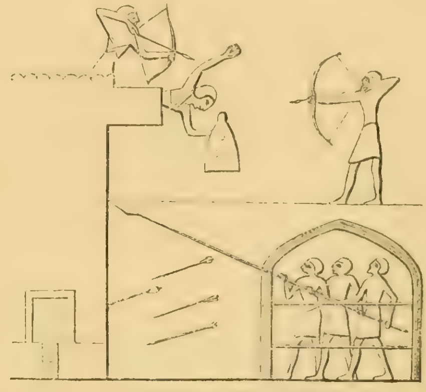
In attacking a fortified place, they advanced under cover of the arrows of the bowmen, and either instantly applied the scaling ladder to the ramparts, or undertook the routine of a regular siege. Of the former operation, that of actual assault on a town, a very lively representation is afforded in the foregoing engraving from a sculpture at Thebes.

In a regular siege, the besiegers advanced to the walls, and posted themselves under the cover of testudos, and shook and dislodged the stones of the parapet by a kind of battering-ram, directed and impelled by a body of men expressly chosen for the service. But when the place held out against these attacks, and neither a *coup de main*, the ladder, nor the ram were found to succeed, it appears probable that the testudo was used to cover the operations of the sappers, while they mined the place.

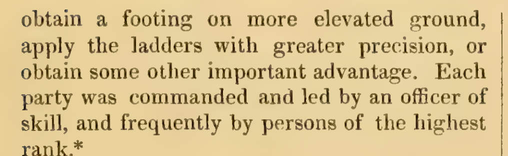
The testudo, as shown in the following engravings, and at the foot of the larger cut (No. 6), which precedes, was of frame-work, sometimes supported by poles having a forked summit, and covered, in all probability, with hides. It was sufficiently large to contain several men, and so placed that the light troops might mount on the outside, and thus



[7. Fortress attacked: Testudo, &c.]



[8. Fortress attacked: Testudo, &c.]



obtain a footing on more elevated ground, apply the ladders with greater precision, or obtain some other important advantage. Each party was commanded and led by an officer of skill, and frequently by persons of the highest rank.*

The besiegers also endeavoured to force open the gates of the town, or to hew them down with axes; and when the fort was built upon a rock, they escaladed the precipitous parts by means of the testudo, or by short spikes of metal, which they forced into the crevices of the stone, and then applied the ladder to the ramparts.†

The cut introduced in the next page (9) conveys a lively idea of the vigour and effect of the assaults of the Egyptian archers. From the costume, we incline to think that the people assaulted are a Syrian nation, and, if so, the fortress forms a remarkably interesting and unique illustration of the subject in hand. We would direct particular attention to the two men who hold in their hands vessels containing a flaming fire. This is doubtless intended as a signal, but whether of submission to the enemy, or to apprise distant friends of the danger, may not easily be determined.

Sir J. G. Wilkinson says,—"It is reasonable to conclude that several other engines were employed in sieges with which the sculptures have not made us acquainted; and the 'bulwarks' used by [rather known to] the Jews on their march to the promised land, were doubtless borrowed from those of Egypt, where they lived until they became a nation, and from whence they derived the greater part of their knowledge upon every subject."

The "bulwark" thus noticed, is the "mount" or mound of Scripture. It was a vast heap of earth strengthened and supported by large quantities of timber. It ran in an oblique direction from the lines of circumvallation towards the weaker points of the fortifications, and was sometimes as high as the wall itself.

* In the cut 6 each of the testudos is under the command of a royal prince; and in the same cut two royal princes lead the scaling party.

† See the cut No. 6, which deserves to be very carefully studied.



[9. Fortress Attacked.]

The construction of these mounds involved a large consumption of timber, in consequence of which the surrounding country was often denuded of trees to supply the demand. It was to prevent the permanently injurious consequences of this practice that the Hebrews were forbidden to fell fruit trees for such purposes, or indeed any trees but such as grew upon uncultivated ground.* The erection of this mound is expressed by the Hebrew phrase, "to cast up a bank against the city." The inhabitants of the town fought against the mound with missile weapons; the besiegers, on the contrary, posting themselves upon it, threw their weapons into the city. In the mean while the battering-rams were brought into play, in order to break down the walls, in which case the besieged frequently erected another wall inside the first, in doing which they pulled down the contiguous houses, and employed the materials in the erection of the wall.†

The lines of circumvallation, incidentally mentioned before, were certainly known in the time of Moses,‡ although not mentioned again till the time of David.§ The besiegers, when it appeared probable that the siege would be protracted, dug a ditch between themselves and the city, for their own security, and another parallel to it outside, so as to enclose their camp, and guard against an attack either in front or rear. The earth thrown out of the ditch formed a wall on which towers were erected. The works in the cut, No. 5, look exceedingly like such lines of circumvallation with double ditches; and we are not at all certain that the works of the besiegers instead of being, as upon the whole we preferred to conclude, the works of the besieged. A city shut up in this way perished by degrees, by famine, pestilence, and missile weapons.*

Sometimes the besieged, when they captured any of the more distinguished of the assailants, scourged them or slew them on the walls, or sacrificed them, that they might intimidate their enemies, and induce them to raise the siege.† When the wall was broken through,‡ and the besiegers had entered, the greater part of the remainder of it was thrown down, as was the case even when the city capitulated.§

* Deut. xx. 19; 2 Sam. xx. 15; 2 Kings xix. 32; Jer. vi. 6; xxxii. 24; xxxiii. 4; Ezek. iv. 2; xvii. 17—23; xxvi. 8.
† Isa. xxii. 10.
‡ Deut. xx. 19, 26.
§ 2 Sam. xx. 15.

* 2 Kings vi, 28—31; xxv. 1; Jer. xxxii. 24; xxxiv. 17; lii. 4; Ezek. iv. 2, 10—15; xvii. 17.
† 2 Kings iii. 27.
‡ Ezek. xxi. 27.
§ 2 Kings xiv. 17; 2 Chron. xxv. 23, 24.





